Midnight in America: An Analysis of White Vote Choice in the 2016 US Presidential Election

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Abstract

In the last decade, populist radical right actors have enjoyed success across a host of advanced Western liberal democracies by mobilizing economically, culturally, and socio-culturally anxious majorities. The United States, a Republic with constitutional structures designed by Founders to prevent the rise of demagogic actors, was thought to be the exception to the populist advance. However, the rise of Trump during the 2016 Republican primaries and his subsequent victory against Hillary Clinton in the general election prompts a re-evaluation. This thesis therefore provides an exploration of the salient economic, cultural, and sociocultural forces that led a majority of White voters to cast their ballots for Donald Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election. To investigate which of these factors is the most salient, the thesis adopts a quantitative research design by analysing nationally representative secondary survey data. While I find that negative economic evaluations mattered in 2016, the most noteworthy set of results concerns the salient relationships between outgroup prejudice and White voters' fear of impending demographic change on vote choice for Trump. The essential contribution to knowledge to which this thesis lays claim is in its ability to better approximate which of these factors mattered the most in contributing to Trump's victory. In this respect, the doctoral thesis builds on the burgeoning literature on White political behaviour in the aftermath of the 2016 election by providing a robust framework that aims to fully account for the various economic, cultural, and socio-cultural dimensions of Trump's victory.

Chapter 1: Trump and the Populist Wave

Introduction

Writing before the unprecedented success of the populist radical right (hereafter, PRR) in Europe, Mudde (2013) thought it 'unlikely' that such fringe parties would become major players in European politics (1). Nonetheless, Mudde (2013) hypothesized about a number of factors that had the potential to increase the potency of the PRR message to European voters. The first of these was the "tabloidization" of political news, which caused a crisis of communication for citizens because of the inability of media organizations to provide an accurate or relevant message to voters about rival, competing political candidates. The second was the aftermath of the Great Recession which began in December 2007, with the effects of job losses and lower wages still being felt well into the recovery for millions of voters (Mudde 2013).

In addition to the robust literature on the success of the PRR in appealing to the economic "have nots" (Norris and Inglehart 2019), scholars have likewise noted that immigration functions as a lightning rod that attracts culturally-anxious voters to PRR parties (Hogan and Haltinner 2015). Ever since Mudde's (2013) seminal lecture, a host of PRR political parties and political actors have increasingly enjoyed electoral success in a host of advanced Western liberal democracies by appealing to these salient economic and cultural grievances. Examples include the success of the Freedom Party (FP) in Austria (Heinisch and Hauser 2016), the Danish People's Party (Christiansen 2016), Viktor Orban and Fidesz in Hungary (Bocskor 2018), Lega Nord in Italy (Brunazzo and Gilbert 2017), and the Swiss People's Party (Mazzoleni and Ivaldi 2020).[1]

[1] Though there is a degree of heterogeneity in the beliefs of PRR parties, it is important to note that most of these parties draw a distinction between their core constituency of "the people" whilst

By contrast, PRR parties in the UK did not enjoy the same level of electoral success as these other aforenoted PRR parties during this time; the British National Party (BNP) had all but disappeared, getting less than 2,000 votes in the 2015 general election. Elsewhere, UKIP had the largest representation in UK delegation to the European Parliament in 2014, but were unable to translate their success into seats at Westminster the following year. Nonetheless, the prospect of losing Eurosceptic voters to a surging UKIP in the 2015 general election was enough cause for David Cameron to pledge to hold an in/out referendum on UK membership of the European Union (EU). When the referendum was held just over a year later, over 17.4 million voted against the status quo to exit the EU. Though the Brexit referendum cannot be characterised as a victory for the populist radical right in an electoral sense, numerous scholars have noted that the influence of UKIP in getting Cameron to hold the referendum in the first place cannot be overstated (Goodwin & Health 2016; Virdee & McGeever 2018).

It is with this pattern of electoral and political success for the PRR in Europe in mind that we turn to consider the case of Donald Trump and the 2016 US Presidential election. When thinking about the success of populist actors in the US, it is important to note that the American system was designed by the nation's Founders, who were guided by a concern to curtail any excess of popular sovereignty to prevent the rise of demagogic actors.[2] Populism thrives in democracies that have unconstrainted popular sovereignty (Ellis 2002). When designing the Republic, the Founders were aware of the large number of democracies that had destroyed themselves over time by giving too much power to "the people" (Canovan

vilifying those who are seen as threatening to the interests of the demos – whether this be elites, or immigrants and minorities (Mudde & Kaltwasser 2017).

[2] Demagogue comes from the Ancient Greek dēmagōgós - or a popular leader. To be a demagogue is to be leader of the people, or demos. However, the historical denotations of the word are more nefarious. Demagogue referred to a rabble rouser who sometimes arose in Athenian democracy (Sacks and Murray 1995).

2005). For this reason, the Founders were wary of the dangers of too much people power. Consequently, the US Constitution was designed with impediments against the rise of populist demagogues who seek to exploit majority faction.[3]

While constraints against an excess of majority faction and demagoguery inherent in the US Constitution explain why presidential candidates with a populist bent historically failed to gain traction in national elections, these constraints were not enough to prevent the election of Trump in 2016. It is certainly true that Trump ran for the nomination of one of the two major parties, but his ascendency during the 2016 Republican primaries has been characterised by some as a hostile takeover of a major political party by a radically different type of politician to previous Republican nominees, and was also met with intra-party hostility from GOP elites (Johnson et al. 2018; Saldin & Teles 2020).

The significance of Trump's victory cannot be overstated; his election represented a fundamental divergence from America's post-war electoral patterns. Trump was a candidate beyond the mainstream, widely seen as having little chance of winning power (Brooks 2015; Enten 2015), who rode to victory by reaching out to a particular demographic rather than a broad coalition of voters. Trump's election therefore connects with what scholars contend is a broader "populist wave" enveloping advanced Western liberal democracies (Eatwell & Goodwin, 2018). This wave is significant because it represents a challenge to traditional centre left/centre right mainstream political parties in Europe and the US, as well as their political agendas and worldviews. Understanding Trump's unlikely victory in the 2016 US

[3] To prevent the rise of a demagogic leader, the Founders ensured that the President was not directly elected by the people, but indirectly via the Electoral College. Each state has a number of Electors equal to its combined Congressional delegation of Representatives and Senators. In turn, these Electors cast their vote for President based on the winner of the state's popular vote. This system was designed as a safeguard against those who Hamilton (Kesler 2003) noted had 'talents for low intrigue, and the little arts of popularity' from becoming President (354). Therefore, one does not become President by appealing to the most populous states; they require broad support throughout the Union including among the smaller states.

Presidential election this context is particularly important as we need to understand what it represents. Trump's success poses a key question that has significant import considering the current and future patterns of the political values and electoral preferences of citizens in advanced Western democracies. His success could be a one off, or, it could be indicative of a new pattern of political behaviour in which White voters are now resistant to the old offers of the political class.

Objectives

There is a major knowledge gap present within the extant body of literature that considers what the salient factors are that created the conditions for Trump's victory. To briefly surmise these explanations, on the one hand, scholars have posited that Trump's victory was a "White working-class revolt" on the part of economically anxious US voters in the Rust Belt region (McQuarrie, 2017). Equally, however, scholars have demonstrated that White identity was a force that led racially-conscious Whites to express exhibit favorable estimations of Trump (Jardina, 2019). Elsewhere, scholars such as Kaufmann and Goodwin (2018) and Major et al. (2018) posit that the threat of increasing diversity is leading White majorities in advanced Western democracies to vote for radical right populist parties and actors.

Critically, there is a broader lack of comparative awareness of these explanatory contexts in the White voting behaviour literature. For example, studies have analysed whether Trump's victory is best explained by economic anxiety or racial resentment without considering the effects of socio-cultural forces such as the threat of increasing diversity (Schaffner et al. 2018). This is problematic because it is not altogether clear which of the particular explanatory contexts are the most potent in shaping the Trump vote. However, it is important that we are able to ascertain which of these explanations is the most potent. This is

because we need to understand whether Trump's victory is best understood in light of traditional theoretical frameworks that have long explained voter behaviour[4] or, whether his election represents a more fundamental re-alignment of US voting patterns along the lines of culture (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018).

Consequently, the principal objective of the doctoral thesis is to better understand the factors that created the conditions for Trump's victory in the 2016 US Presidential election. Because Trump's base of electoral support is overwhelmingly White, the doctoral thesis focuses on the electoral behaviour of White voters only. In order to meet this objective, the doctoral thesis poses three pertinent questions that serve as a basis to help us better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016. The purpose of asking these questions is to further our understanding of which particular dimension of White estrangement from mainstream politics is best represented by Trump's unlikely victory. Having discussed the principal objective guiding the doctoral thesis, the introductory chapter will now turn to address the specific research questions and hypotheses.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Consistent with the aforenoted research objective, the doctoral thesis poses the following three research questions:

1. Is Trump's victory indicative of a White working-class revolt against the political elites in Washington for their perceived failure to adequately address their economic grievances?

[4] For instance, rational choice economic voting (Lewis-Beck & Paldam 2000) posits that individual voting intention is based on voters' evaluations of the performance of the governing party on the economy. However, this framework is somewhat limited in explaining vote choice for Trump when we know that prior evaluations of Obama were also likely to be influenced by factors such as racial resentment (Tesler 2013; 2016).

2. Or, is Trump's victory explained by the activation of a number of forms of White in-group identity/psychological predispositions and out-group prejudice through the usage and deployment of radical right electoral cues?
3. Or, is Trump's victory indicate of the successful electoral mobilization of a cohort of White voters who are increasingly feel as though their dominant-majority status is coming under threat by America's changing demographics?

As will be clear in Chapter 2, which provides an examination of the factors that are claimed to have underpinned the conditions for Trump's victory, each research question is underpinned by an explanatory context that aims to attest to a specific dimension of White estrangement from mainstream politics. These are: "left behind" thesis for research question 1, the cultural decline thesis for the research question 2, the changing America thesis for research question 3. In assessing the robustness of each of these explanatory contexts as frames through which we might better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump (Pew Research Center 2018), the doctoral thesis tests a total of 6 hypothesis that contribute to our understanding of each of the explanatory contexts. The introductory chapter will now outline each of these hypothesis briefly.

In asking the first research question, the doctoral thesis tests the robustness of the "left behind" thesis as a frame for understanding White vote choice for Trump. There are two competing hypotheses underpinning our understanding of "left behind" explanations for Trump's victory. The first hypothesis (**H1**) posits that Trump's victory can indeed be conceptualized as a "revolt" on the part of the economically-anxious White working class. The critical argument underpinning **H1** is that White voters – and especially those without a college education in blue-collar occupations – were mobilized to vote for Trump because of their concerns about economic mobility and unfair foreign competition (Sides et al. 2018).

Conversely, the second hypothesis (**H2**) puts forward a more nuanced theory to explain Trump's victory. Most notably, Eatwell and Goodwin observe that classifying phenomena such as Brexit and Trump as White working-class "backlashes" are unsupported when one looks at both events with a more nuanced lens (2018, p. xviii). Consistent with this argument, a number of analyses of the "left behind" literature have noted that the economic anxieties of White voters are becoming increasing difficult to disentangle from such voters' cultural grievances (Vance 2016; Bhambra 2017; Hochschild 2018).

In asking the second research question, the doctoral thesis addresses the robustness of the cultural decline thesis as a frame for understanding why a majority of Whites voted for Trump (Pew Research Center 2018). As was the case with the first explanatory context, there are a further two hypotheses contributing to our understanding of the cultural decline thesis. Consistent with the emerging theoretical importance of in-group favouritism as a predictor of Whites' political behaviour (Jardina 2019), the third hypothesis (**H3**) posits that Trump's victory was dependent on the "activation" of a number of salient in-group identities. Examples of these in-group identities include American ethnic identity (Thompson 2020), White ethnocentrism (Kinder and Kam 2010), and White racial identity (Jardina 2019). By contrast, the fourth hypothesis (**H4**) contends that forms of out-group prejudice, and most especially anti-Black racism, will be salient predictors of vote choice in 2016 because of Trump's rhetoric towards immigrants and minorities throughout the campaign.

Finally, in posing the third research question, the doctoral thesis is assessing the robustness of the changing America thesis as a frame for better understanding why the majority of Whites voted for Trump. Once again, there are an additional two hypotheses underpinning this final explanatory context. These hypotheses are respectively known as the "exit route" and the "voice route." The "exit route" hypothesis (**H5**) posits that there is a relationship between increasing diversity and declining social capital in advanced Western

liberal democracies including the US (Putnam 2007; Murray 2010). Specifically, this hypothesis contends that increasing ethnic diversity causes individuals to "hunker down" and withdraw from civic life, including formal participation in the electoral process. **H5** contends that diversity causes Whites to withdraw from multiple aspects of civic life including, crucially, formal participation in politics (such as voting in elections). By contrast, the "voice route" hypothesis (**H6**) posits that White majorities perceive diversity as a threat to their group status, which in turn may mobilise them to vote for radical right actors who promise to reduce immigration (Kaufmann and Goodwin 2018).

Thesis Structure

In order to meet the research objectives, the doctoral thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 begins with a comprehensive review of the extant academic literature concerning Trump's White support. An examination of over 120 works of the White vote choice literature reveals three conceptually-distinct explanatory contexts (these are the "left behind" thesis, the cultural decline thesis, and the changing America thesis). Discussion of extant literature is structured around each of these explanatory contexts. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the limitations of these explanatory contexts as frames through which we might understand why so many Whites voted for Trump in 2016.

Following on from the review of the popular and scholarly accounts of Trump's White support, Chapter 3 provides a methodological outline of the doctoral thesis. The chapter begins with an elucidation of the onto-epistemological approach (positivism) underpinning the empirical investigation of the robustness of the three explanatory contexts delineated in Chapter 2. The chosen methodology (quantitative) and research design (correlational analysis of cross-sectional, secondary survey data) used to investigate the objectives, questions, and hypotheses of the research are also discussed. Additionally, the

chapter details the sources of survey data that will be used to specify the vote choices models. Having delineated these data sources, the chapter then outlines the modelling strategy that is used to assess the vote choice of White 2016 voters, providing an overview of the baseline socio-demographic and structural covariates that are included as model parameters. The chapter considers additional factors that may have influenced vote choice in 2016, but were nonetheless excluded from the vote choice model because of constraints in the existing data. Finally, the chapter concludes with a reflection on the methods employed to investigate vote choice for Trump, laying the groundwork for the first principal findings chapter which tests the robustness of the first explanatory context.

Chapter 4 is the first of the three principal findings chapters. This first principal findings chapter tests the empirical validity of the "left behind" thesis. The first test of the robustness of this explanatory context involves examining whether Trump's victory can be conceptualized as a White working-class "revolt" **(H1).** To do this, Chapter 4 analyses support for Trump in the Industrial Midwest – a region of the US that has experienced the effects of deindustrialization and resulting job losses in manufacturing over the years. Additionally, the chapter analyses whether Whites' opposition to free trade and outsourcing is associated with voting for Trump. The chapter then specifies a series of models testing whether White voters' short-term economic assessments are associated with voting for Trump.

To test **H2**, Chapter 4 examines whether Whites' perceptions of the pace of the economic recovery from the 2008 recession feeds into evaluations for Obama. Analysis of the relationship between evaluations of the economic recovery and affect for Obama is important because we begin to see the ways in which the economic assessments of White voters often intersect with their attitudes towards racial minorities. To further explore these complex economic and cultural relationships, the chapter also analyses whether White voters'

economic assessments are moderated by perceptions of the effect of immigration on the US labor market and economy. As an additional test of **H2**, Chapter 4 explores why White Americans are perceived as voting for Trump largely at the behest of their own economic interests (Frank, 2004; Hochschild 2018). Specifically, the chapter analyses whether Whites with poor evaluations of their local communities, but likewise express an opposition to increased state spending and government intervention, voted for Trump in 2016. Chapter 4 then concludes by reflecting on the significance of the findings and lays the groundwork for examination of the second explanatory context in the next principal findings chapter.

Chapter 5 is the second principal findings chapter, and tests the robustness of the cultural decline thesis as a frame for understanding why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump (Pew Research Center 2018). To test **H3**, Chapter 5 first delineates the salient forms of White in-group identity/psychological predispositions (namely, White ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and White identity). Chapter 5 hypothesizes that the "activation" of these in-group identities by radical right populist actors such as Trump prompted Whites with salient levels of group consciousness to coalesce around his candidacy. The hypothesized effects of these identities are then tested in a series of White models. Having analysed the salience of these in-group identities/psychological predispositions on vote choice, the chapter then turns to analyse the salience of out-group prejudice on vote choice (**H4**). Here, Chapter 5 explores why racial resentment remained a significant predictor of White vote choice in 2016 in spite of Obama's absence on the ballot. Chapter 5 then concludes by reflecting on the significance of the findings and lays the groundwork for the examination of the final explanatory context in the next principal findings chapter.

Chapter 6 is the final principal findings chapter, and tests the robustness of the changing America thesis as a frame for understanding White vote choice. Chapter 6 begins with a brief contextual section that outlines how America's demographics have changed since

the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, which ended historical quotas on immigration from outside Western and Northern Europe. Next, Chapter 6 tracks the decline of community in the US, which key theorists in the American social capital literature such as Putnam (2000) posit began in the early Seventies. To bridge the link between increasing ethno-racial diversity and crumbling social capital, Chapter 6 then unpacks Putnam's (2007) "hunkering down" thesis. To test **H5**, Chapter 6 explores the relationship between political participation and Whites' contact with diversity using a subset of Whites from the most recent wave of the General Social Survey (GSS). Having tested **H5**, Chapter 6 finally turns to explore **H6** by seeing if Whites who felt as though the dominant-group position was threatened by diversity in 2016 were likely to vote for Trump. Chapter 6 then concludes by reflecting on the significance of the findings, and lays the groundwork for the critical synthesis of the changing America thesis with the other explanatory contexts in the discussion chapter.

Chapter 7 provides a discussion and critical synthesis of the findings and conclusions of the three principal findings chapters. The chapter aims to assess which of the explanatory contexts provides the greatest amount of explanatory power in helping us to better understand what Trump's victory best represents. To do this, the chapter estimates a model that fully accounts for the various economic, cultural and socio-cultural explanations of Trump's victory. Crucially, this estimation strategy allows for comparison of the magnitude, direction, and significance of the various effects of each explanatory variable. Consequently, we will be able to empirically approximate which factor (or, indeed set of factors) were the most salient predictors of White vote choice.

Once the chapter has established which factor (or set of factors) were the most salient in contributing to Trump's victory, the chapter then turns to assess the limitations of this new knowledge. To do this, Chapter 7 adopts a number of empirical strategies to test the robustness of the results. One factor to consider is whether any of the other candidates for

President in 2016 would have been successful in appealing to the same set of economically, culturally, and socio-culturally aggrieved Whites that voted for Trump. Therefore, the chapter specifies a series of alternative vote choice models where White respondents were presented with a series of hypothetical candidate matchups. Another important factor to consider is whether the factors that contributed to Trump's victory were uniquely important in the 2016 election, or whether such factors are merely the continuation of trends that have long shaped White voter behaviour. To test this expectation, the chapter looks at the vote choice of Whites in past Presidential elections to see if voters' cultural and socio-cultural concerns were especially salient cleavages before 2016.

Chapter 8 concludes with a reflection on how these results further our existing understanding of the 2016 US Presidential election, as well as which voter cleavages we may expect to continue to be especially important to understanding White political behaviour in future elections.

Chapter 2: The Accounts of Trump's White Support

Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on White vote choice for Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election. The literature is trifurcated into the following significant explanatory contexts. These are (**i**) the "left behind" thesis; (**ii**) the cultural decline thesis; and (**iii**) the changing America thesis. The chapter begins with an exploration of the "left behind" thesis. The "left behind" thesis primarily frames Trump's victory as a "revolt" on the part of the White voters, and especially those without a college education (Gest 2016; Williams 2017). A number of these studies assert that many Whites lack upward mobility due to lower rates of educational attainment. Likewise, many Whites are crippled by a lack of geographic mobility and are unable to migrate to find better opportunities beyond their hometowns (Wuthnow 2018). A lack of upward mobility thus leaves many Whites angry at the Washington elites for not improving their situations, leading them to vote for Trump as an act of defiance against the political class.

The second significant explanatory context is the cultural decline thesis. Authors of this thesis frame Whites through a "dominant majority" ethnoracial paradigm (Mutz 2018). They contend that America's demographic and cultural change has eroded White American's position as the "dominant group" in US society. White Americans' fear of losing the status afforded to them by their dominant position has been mobilised into a political cleavage. This makes the group receptive to political messages that stoke racial resentment and animus towards immigrants (Norris and Inglehart 2019). Increased support for Trump is thus correlated with resonance between his ethno-nationalist rhetoric and latent "racist" attitudes within the broader pool of White voters (Bonikowski 2017). The cultural decline thesis also implies that white Americans see themselves as an ethnoracial group and that this group

identity has become a salient factor in their party politics and policy preferences (Jardina 2019). However, authors of the cultural decline thesis only explore white Americans' reactions to diversity, rather than looking at the effects of diversity itself on White Americans' political behaviour.

Consequently, the chapter also explores a third significant explanation related to the implications of a changing America for White Americans. Elucidating the history of nativist movements before the passage of landmark immigration legislation in 1965 indicates that Americans have long expressed uneasiness about new immigrants and still do today. Scholarly reactions against nativist thinking led to formulations of sociological theories of cultural assimilation (Kallen 1916). More contemporary assimilation theories such as acculturation explore the relationship between intergroup relations and increasing diversity in America today (Berry 1997). Bringing together Berry's (1997) framework and the social capital/trust literature (Putnam 2007) highlights a troubling relationship between diversity and decreasing levels of intra/intergroup ethnoracial trust. This relationship is significant because it explains why Whites are increasingly voting for right-wing populist actors such as Trump (Kaufmann and Goodwin 2018).

The chapter concludes with a reflection of the significance of the findings and lays the groundwork for the development of an empirical model in the upcoming methodology chapter. Crucially, this model will allow us to test the robustness of the three explanatory contexts as frames through which we can better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 in chapters 4 through 6 (Pew Research Center 2018).

The "Left Behind"

Trump and the White Working-Class

Scholars of the "left behind" literature frame Trump's victory in 2016 as a "revolt" on the part of the White working-class (Gest 2016; McQuarrie 2017; Williams 2017). An analysis of the election data indicates that there was room for Trump to improve on Mitt Romney's performance among white Americans in 2012. Some two million who had voted for John McCain in 2008 were 'missing' on Election Day in 2012 (Trende 2013). Obama's margin over Mitt Romney in the popular vote was 5 million. However, the number of non-college-educated whites of voting age who did not vote was 24 million (Wassermann 2016). The question that remained was whether enough white-working-class Americans would turn out to elect Trump.

Morgan and Lee (2018) find that the White working-class did indeed compromise a sizeable proportion of Trump's base in the 2016 Election. Using self-report voter data from the American National Election Study (ANES), they observe that 28 percent of those who voted for Trump in 2016 had either voted for Obama in the 2012 Election or had not voted in 2012 (Morgan and Lee 2018*:* 240). Of these two pools of voters that went for Trump, those who had voted for Obama in 2012 were 'disproportionately' likely to be working-class whites', while non-voters were most likely to be white (Morgan and Lee 2018*:* 240). These findings are significant as they provide empirical weight to popular observations that the White working-class were crucial for Trump's victory.

Nonetheless, there are those who remain sceptical of the notion that Trump's victory was a "revolt" on the part of White voters, and especially those without a college degree. For instance, Silver (2016a) points to state-level exit poll data from Republican primary states. The data indicated that median household income of Trump voters was $72,000, a figure that was 'well above' the national median of $56,000. Carnes and Lupu (2017) concur, pointing to exit poll

data from Republican primary states and post-election day data from ANES, with the data leading the authors to conclude that the ' Trump coalition 'looked a lot like it did during the primaries' (Carnes and Lupu 2017).

There are, however, reasons to be wary of the conclusions drawn from data released straight after the election. Roediger notes class is 'not well studied by anyone via instant analysis of election results' (2017). Roediger (2017) points to the 'crude' definitions based on measurements of income from the exit poll data (2016). Indeed, statisticians such as Silver (2016b) corrected their prior conclusions when the exit poll data was released. After the election, Silver (2016b) reran the numbers and found that 'educational levels are the critical factor' in determining shifts in the vote between 2012 and 2016. The 2016 election data indicate a 9-point shift in the non-college educated White vote towards the Republican Party between 2012 and 2016 (Schaffner et al. 2018). This is a critically important observation, given that educational attainment is a robust determinant of one's class status. Given the intrinsic link between education and class, it is useful to consider the differences between college- and non-college educated individuals. This is because elucidation of these differences may help us understand why so many Whites without a college education voted for Trump in 2016.

The social and familial networks of American college graduates are entirely different from those of non-college-educated individuals. Sociologists approximate these differences with the use of the terms "professional" and "clique" 'networks' (Williams 2017: 35–36). On the one hand, College graduates enter professional vocations, forming professional networks. Professional networks are composed of large matrices of acquaintances whom elite professionals encounter in their specialised career field. Conversely, the working-class live their lives in tightly formed and deeply rooted "clique" networks (Nelson 1966). These networks have material benefits in working-class communities. As Williams notes,

individuals in such communities “have each other’s backs” from babysitting their friends’ children to assisting with house repairs (2017).

The full title of Williams book is *White Working-class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America* (2017), but class and race are not explored in a way that elucidates their complex relationship in the American context. This is a critical omission, given that non-college educated Whites made up 63% of the Trump coalition, while 20 per cent were college educated White (Pew Research Center 2018). Consequently, we must look elsewhere if we are to clarify the role of race and class in understanding why Trump won in 2016. Greater clarity in this respect comes from Reed (2002). Reed notes that the juxtaposition of class and race so ‘familiar… in debates about American inequality’ misunderstands both phenomena by ‘treating them as… indistinguishable’ (Reed 2002: 266).

Discussing class in a vacuum errs on the side of ‘simplistic, economistic interpretation’ (Reed 2002: 270). However, this is problematic, for it disregards the importance of the role race plays in class struggles in the United States. Indeed, such thinking was endemic of the inability of large parts of the American left to think of race and class together during the 2016 campaign season. Bernie Sanders, for instance, who ran to the left of Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primaries, consistently emphasised that class was more important than race and identity politics (Arceneaux 2016). By contrast, Clinton was more embracive of the role that ethnic identity plays in class struggles, and subsequently won the nomination.

A way of thinking about race and class that brings the two into one frame comes from Roediger (1999). In *Wages of Whiteness,* Roediger (1999) asserts that antiracist identity politics are a just response to the “racialisation” of class politics. Wages of Whiteness thus sets the foundations for critical whiteness studies to note how the category of “working-class” became intertwined with connotations of race. As Virdee (2017) asserts, to see oneself as working-class was also to see oneself as White and in ‘relational opposition to… non-White

social groups' (2). To authors such as Roediger (1999), race is thus not a false construct of ideas and beliefs, but a simulacrum with a basis in reality. Consequently, we now see how race and class are better understood when construed as 'equivalent and overlapping elements' rooted in a 'singular system of social power and stratification' (Reed 2002: 266).

Race and class have a 'historically specific' meaning in America, with their intersection being a 'fact of life' that is older than the Republic itself (Reed 2002: 266). Examination of this history is absent in the Williams' (2017) work. Consequently, the chapter now turns to an authoritative past voice on the subject. An authoritative text on the history of whiteness and labour is *Black Reconstruction* by Du Bois (2014). The "White Worker" that Du Bois posits reaps the monetary benefits ascribed by their class status. While a position predicated on racial disparities had prevailed since the early time of the Republic, the institution of involuntary servitude had started to weaken by the mid-Nineteenth Century.

In 1857, anti-slavery fervour was catching in the English labour movement. However, such feelings found 'limited influence' across the Atlantic (Du Bois 2014: 25). American unions were willed to abolish servitude, but '[presently] self-preservation called for slavery' (Du Bois: 2014: 25). In other words, unions expressed concern at the prospect of millions of poor White labourers competing for jobs with free slaves. Indeed, poor Whites expressed the 'vivid fear of the Negro as a competitor in labor [sic]' (Du Bois: 2014: 29). While Wilson (2012) questions the relevance of race around the economic arrangements of contemporary American society, the election of Trump prompts a re-evaluation. Consequently, scholars such as Schaffner et al (2018), who debate whether economic insecurity or racial animus drove Trump's election, may have missed whether, in a Du Boisean vain, it is some alchemy between the two.

This sub-section has assessed the extent of Trump's support among the White working-class and has also explored the nature of working-class whiteness in the US.

Elucidation of the extent of Trump's White working-class support and the meaning of White class identity in the American context is important given that 63 per cent of non-college educated Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). We need to know what the Trump coalition looks like demographically if we are to test the robustness of the "left behind" thesis in the upcoming principal findings chapter.

Critically, however, Trump's robust levels of support among the White voters without a college education is only one aspect of the "left behind" thesis. The socio-demographic group did not vote for Trump in such large numbers because they were White and did not have a college education. Rather, it is likely the case that there were a number of salient factors which explain why so many saw Trump as a viable candidate for President in 2016. Indeed, a common motif in the "left behind" literature is the observation that many support populist actors because of their anger towards elites (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018). Among other things, this anger is grounded in the perception that those in power have failed to improve conditions that are necessary for upward mobility (Sensier and Devine, 2017). Consequently, the next sub-section unpacks the relationship between upward mobility and support for Trump in 2016.

Upward Mobility

Examples of upward mobility between classes seem outliers considering the many barriers to success that working-class children face in their early development. Belonging to a higher social class provides middle-class parents with the resources to support their children's learning (Lareau 1987). Children from middle-class families and children who go to middle-class schools often enjoy the encouragements their parents and teachers give them to learn, from helping them with homework, to getting highly structured private tuition (Reay et al. 2009*:* 1108). Conversely, working-class children often lack external support from both

their parents and teachers. This is because their home and educational environments are not furnished with the same resources that middle-class children have. Such examples include access to the internet at home and attendance at schools with a higher teacher–pupil ratio. As a result, Reay et al. (2009) observed that working-class children tend to report higher levels of self-regulation in learning than those who are not of a working-class background *(*1108).

Working-class students possess a resilience to cope with adversity; an ability with a more significant association among working-class cohorts vis-à-vis 'middle-classness [sic]' (Reay et al*:* 2009*:* 1110). In working-class contexts, one assumes resilience. The quality becomes a valuable resource for working-class students; when entering the world of higher education (HE), they find themselves in new and unfamiliar contexts. Still, working-class students entering HE experience difficulties in their first year (Reay et al. 2009*:* 1112).

In one study of the English education system, Reay (2001) interviewed mature working-class students, many of them entering university for the first time. Reay (2001) found that students expressed fears of becoming lost within their new environment while they tried to "hold on" to a 'cohesive self that retained an anchor in what had gone before' (337). Granfield (1999) finds that working-class students experience class stigma from "asymmetrical class interactions", with many finding themselves interacting with middle-class students for the first time (332). Consequently, working-class students experience devaluations of their own identity, reacting in ways typical of stigma management. Students came to see their backgrounds as a barrier to success since they lacked the cultural capital necessary to interact with their middle and upper-class counterparts (Granfield 1991*:* 332).

Cultural capital refers to a collection of items such as tastes, clothing, mannerisms, personal objects and formal qualifications that are associated with membership of a particular social class. Bourdieu (1984) argues that cultural capital comes in three forms. These three forms are embodied, objectified and institutionalised cultural capital. Objectified cultural

capital compromises one's property. The possession of cultural capital is thus symbolically conveyed and facilitated through the ownership of objects that one associates with higher forms of capital. Meanwhile, institutionalised cultural capital refers to the acquisition of formal titles and qualifications such as university degrees that symbolise cultural authority. We know from the postelection data that the majority of Trump's working-class base lack possession of formal qualifications such as a bachelor's degree (Silver 2016). Therefore, we begin to see a relationship between a lack of institutional forms of cultural capital and higher levels of support for Trump in the 2016 election.

The other form, embodied cultural capital, is best understood when considered in relation to Bourdieu's (1984) notion of habitus. Habitus is the embodiment of cultural capital. It refers to the long-established set of habits and dispositions that individuals acquire through their experiences in a variety of distinct "fields". Each field thus has its own set of rules and unwritten truths (Doxa), as well as forms of cultural capital. One's habitus, or taste in cultural objects such as art and clothing, thus differs depending on what field they belong to. In Distinction, Bourdieu (1984) links individual tastes to one's ingrained social class position (100). For instance, Bourdieu (1984) observes that individuals in French society belonging to upper-class strata had "highbrow" tastes in art (32). Such individuals had been exposed to art at a relatively young age and had learned a longer amount of time to begin to appreciate it. Conversely, working-class individuals had not had the same level of exposure to high art. By extension, they had not accrued the habitus necessary to partake in the "game" of 'high art' appreciation (1984: 34).

This condition is likewise apparent in the field of elite education. Working-class students entering this field have the distinction of being cultural outsiders. This is because they lack the 'manners of speech, attire, values and experiences' associated with those of higher classes (Granfield 1992: 336–337). Granfield (1991) finds that students manage class

stigma by adopting such mannerisms but afterwards felt guilty for "selling out" on their class as a result of their adjustment strategies. They managed this ambivalence by maintaining an 'ideological distance' between the very classes that they were trying to emulate (Granfield 1992: 344). Successful working-class students also feel guilty about their newfound upward mobility, including, for instance, avoiding those who 'remind [them] of their social obligations towards helping the less fortunate' (Granfield 1992: 347). Just the mere association with individuals whose career trajectories involve helping the disadvantaged led to 'considerable uneasiness' in working-class law-students who had entered large firms (Granfield 1992: 347).

However, upward mobility is only one example of various types of mobility that accounts for why so many Whites are "left behind". Another type of mobility especially relevant in the "left behind" literature is the notion of "horizontal" or geographic mobility. Whereas the notion of upward mobility refers to mobility between class strata, geographic mobility, on the other hand, refers to the mobility of labour across geographically defined spaces, as well as the migration of people from one community to another. The next subsection thus explores whether geographic mobility provides a robust explanatory context as to how the White Americans who voted for Trump in 2016 are "left behind".

Geographic Mobility

A lack of geographic mobility mainly affects rural communities. Areas across America with the highest variation in rates of upward mobility tend to be in rural areas. In a recent county-level analysis, Krause and Reeves (2018) conclude that rural areas with higher rates of geographic mobility tend to have higher quality education and lower rates of residential segregation. Most strikingly, however, they find that rural areas with the best rates of upward mobility are the ones with the highest rates of out-migration (Krause and Reeves 2018: 19).

It is clear from qualitative interviews with rural Americans that they are “angry” at Washington and the political class (Fallows and Fallows 2018; Hochschild 2018). Rural Americans are in no doubt that the federal government is to blame for many of the problems raised in Krause and Reeves (2018) Brookings report. Findings from the 2017 Kaiser Family Foundation/Washington Post Partnership Survey reveal that rural Americans express broad scepticism that Washington is fair or effective at improving people’s economic situations. For instance, 64% of rural Americans believe federal assistance is going to “irresponsible people getting government help they do not deserve” is a more common occurrence than “needy people getting by without government help” (Washington Post/ Kaiser Family Foundation 2017: 14). Elsewhere, the rural–urban schism becomes apparent—another 50% of rural respondents consider that Washington does more to help those living in urban areas. While only 37% think Washington treats rural and urban areas the same (Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation 2017: 17).

These statistics echo the findings of Wuthnow (2018). Based on an eight-year study involving interviews with rural Americans, Wuthnow (2018) finds that Washington is not only geographically distant from the rural heartland, but that its inhabitants bespeak a cultural divide. The federal government is also perceived in ways which are “threatening” to their small-town ways of life (Wuthnow 2018). Wuthnow (2018) heard a common refrain when asking rural-folk what they thought of Washington—a variation of the phrase "leave us alone!” (101). Interviewees also expressed anger at overburdensome government regulations; not in the way that one might hear Congressional Republicans decry excess “red tape”, but because of the impact that regulations had on their local facilities (Wuthnow 2018: 104–105). It is not a simple case of rural Americans disliking regulations. If it were, it becomes difficult to explain why so many ‘think [that] Washington is broken’ and how this relates to the ‘moral fabric’ of their communities (Wuthnow 2018: 106).

Some argue that rural Americans are not entirely blameless for their predicament. For example, in an interview with Vox, Illing (2018) proposes to Wuthnow that rural American's were not "left behind", they just 'chose not to keep up.' However, this is too simplistic an argument that ignores the barriers to successful horizontal mobility that rural residents face (Chetty et al. 2017). Leaving also entails losing the little semblance of community that rural Americans have left; Wuthnow concurs and observes that rural townsfolk 'like knowing their neighbours' and living in a community which feels 'small and closed'—they are making the best of a bad situation, and 'they [nonetheless] choose to stay' (Illing 2018).

In summary, the "left behind" thesis has brought two major contributions to the chapter, which aims to understand why 54 per cent of White Americans voted for Trump. First, we see that White Americans without a college education have low rates of economic and geographic mobility, and lack accrued forms of institutional and embodied cultural capital Second, we are aware that a lack of these items might explain why Whites coalesced around Trump. Part of this stems from the observation that "left behind" Americans tend to see the elites in Washington at fault for failing to improve their conditions and make their lives better. By contrast, Trump positioned himself as an outsider who claimed that the Washington swamp was broken and that he was the one who could fix the problems faced by so many "left behind" Whites.

Notwithstanding, there are salient forces behind the election Trump that does not fit "left behind" thinking. For instance, how are we to explain the unexpectedly high levels of public acceptance from a sizeable wedge of the American populace of Trump's controversial statements aimed at minorities and immigrants? Examples of these questions are ones broadly concerning issues of culture. More specifically, however, they are ones that are motived by a fear of the erosion of a dominant cultural position expressed by White Americans. Such considerations have taken a back seat to more extensive discussions of

mobility in the works the chapter has discussed thus far. Consequently, the chapter next turns to examine a second significant explanatory context. The second major section will address the salient issue of cultural decline, and how such a decline may have led white Americans to coalesce around Trump in the 2016 Election

Cultural Decline

In a widely read article published during the 2016 US primary season, Malone (2016) observed that something was driving Trump's support that was considerably more significant than working-class anger at being "left behind". 'Looking at the numbers', noted Malone, it seemed that Trump's voters cared more about 'cultural conservatism [and] racial resentment' than they did other issues (2016). Indeed, results of a FiveThirtyEight/SurveyMonkey poll found that 'one of the most indicative' variables in determining Trump support was the number of people who agreed with the statement: 'the number of immigrants who come to the United States each year should decrease' (Malone 2016).

Trump's rhetoric was highly polarising and yet, it is clear that his words resonated with the Republican primary electorate. Understanding Trump's victory in this context is especially important because the 2016 Republican field was the largest in the recent history of either major political party until the 2020 Democratic primaries. Voters had a full range of varying forms of conservatism to choose from, from libertarianism (Rand Paul) to social conservatism (Mike Huckabee, Rick Santorum), to neoconservatism (Lindsey Graham). Despite all of these choices, however, Trump prevailed with a unique brand of nationalist populism (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018). In light of these observations, the following section proceeds to discuss what it was Trump said regarding America's cultural decline that seemed to resonate with White Americans in particular.

Trump and the Politics of Resentment

As the values of today's younger, more ethnically diverse cohorts have become cosmopolitan, the more 'traditional' values of older, less educated and more ethnically homogenous generations have not changed (Norris and Inglehart 2019: 101). Today's post-material society is out of step with the world that older White Americans once knew, leading them to feel displaced and resentful. The faster that these changes have occurred, the more stoked the 'culture wars' (that is, the conflict between older generational values and postmaterialist values) have become (Norris and Inglehart 2019: 123). Examples of significant sources of resentment include hostility towards immigrants, as well as religious and ethnic minorities, who bring change to previously homogenous advanced Western liberal democracies. Using intergenerational cohort analysis, Norris and Inglehart (2019) find that older, less educated generations tend to express such sentiments more so than younger cohorts (p. 98). Most strikingly, they find that support of populist parties and leaders who defend traditional cultural values and make xenophobic and nationalist overtures skew towards the same group (Norris and Inglehart 2019: 20).

Scholars observe that Trump stoked resentment towards immigrants and minorities in an attempt to mobilise support among white Americans (Thompson 2020). Jardina (2019), for instance, notes that the only agenda issue on Trump's campaign website when he first launched his candidacy for President in July 2015 was about immigration restriction (233). This was a sign that resentment towards immigrants was one of his primary strategies in garnering greater support among anxious white voters. In another example, Bobo (2017) notes that Trump 'fuelled and exploited anxiety' about America's increasing diversity by 'demonising [sic] and scapegoating Mexican immigrants [and] Muslims' (99). Likewise, Schaffner et al. (2018) note that Trump's 'strategy' involved 'using explicitly racist… appeals to win over white voters' (15). However, Schaffner et al. (2018) use the premise of

racism without exploring the meaning of the term concerning the group (White Americans) studied. While Schaffner et al. (2018) do not raise racism as a moot point, greater conceptual clarity of racism is needed if we are to understand how it drove Trump support.

Bobo's (2017) study stands out in this regard. Devoting four pages to a careful elucidation and definition of racism, Bobo (2017) contends that 'white supremacist notions' influenced Enlightenment thinking and its subsequent application in the construction of American institutions at the Founding (p. 89). Throughout American history to today, racism in America has meant a continual denial of 'full and common humanity for members of a particular group' (Bobo 2017: 99). Bobo (2017) goes on to say that Trump's desire to "Make America Great Again" was a 'none-too-subtle dog whistle' to a desire for his supporters to return to a privileged white position (100).[5]

Bobo's (2017) theoretical piece does not set out to engage in a detailed empirical explanation of the relationship between levels of anxiety and threat towards increasing ethnoracial diversity and white working-class voter mobilisation in the 2016 election. Nonetheless, tying the "MAGA" message of ideas of white hegemony in this analysis lays the groundwork for further empirical research into the fact that white Americans feel as if their group position is under threat. Consequently, the next subsection turns to examine what authors of the literature call "group-threat", and whether or not the condition has any effect on the coalescing of white Americans around right-wing populist actors such as Trump.

[5] Indeed, the notion of the "restoration" of American greatness is far from new. Many a politician employed "Make America Great Again" as a slogan in their political campaigns before Trump service-marked the term in 2015. For example, amid stagflation and a worsening economy under President Carter, one of Reagan's campaign slogans in the 1980 presidential election was "Let's Make America Great Again" (Klingbeil et al. 2018). This earlier example highlights the evolution of the type of restoration promised by its chief orator; while Reagan's message was primarily a promise of the restoration of economic security of the working-class, Trump's use of the term harks to the restoration of an increasingly fading dominant cultural position held by white Americans.

Group Threat and the Dominant Majority

Theoretical analyses on the motivational foundations of conservatism posit that societal instability, uncertainty and the perception of threat are associated with endorsement of conservative views (Jost et al. 2003; 2007). However, dominant group members do not just react to physical threats of danger, but also abstract concerns such as the future loss of their majority status. Threats to a group's position trigger what authors of the intergroup relations literature call "out-group prejudice" (Pratto and Shih. 2000; Zarate et al. 2004). For example, in an experimental study testing if intergroup threat moderated the relationship between group status and group identification, Morrison et al. (2009) found that members of 'high status' groups were more likely than those with lower-group membership to respond to threat with a high social dominance orientation.[6]

Research examining reactions to majority–minority ethnoracial demographic shifts reveal that white Americans imagining a future white minority perceive the shift as a threat to their ethnoracial group's societal status. This perception leads whites to express more negative racial attitudes. In an experimental study using psychological items to gauge how the salience of America's demographic shifts affected white American's party-political preferences and ideologies, Craig and Richeson (2014a) exposed their participants to information conveying facts about demographic change. After exposure, they found that white Americans endorsement of more conservative candidates and policies increased (Craig & Richeson, 2014a, p. 1196). The most important implication of the study was that white Americans might become increasingly likely and motivated to support conservative candidates and policies in response to increasing ethnoracial diversity (Craig & Richeson,

[6] High levels of social dominance orientation are a "strategic" or group-serving response to an external threat. The casual inference being that dominant group members 'feel as though they have more to lose' if a threat becomes realised and thus react strategically to preserve their dominance (Morrison et al. 2009*:* 209).

2014a, p. 1196). The study carries further foresight because Craig and Richeson noted that commentators were being too premature about the decline of the Republican Party due to the waning electoral influence of white Americans (Heavey 2012; Wickam 2012).

The literature that has been published since Trump's victory attests to Craig and Richeson's (2014a) prescience. Mutz (2018) tracks the same voters between the 2012 and 2016 Presidential Elections to see if issue positions on race reflecting perceived status threat increased the likelihood of voters shifting to Trump in 2016. Perceived status threat, Mutz (2018) theorises, makes the status quo and existing hierarchical and political arrangements 'attractive' to dominant group members (4331). Amidst changing times, conservatism then surges as dominant group members long for the stable hierarchies of the past.

Perceived threat triggers "defensive" reactions from the dominant group, who place greater emphasis on the importance of group norms while expressing increased negativity towards out-groups. When confronted with evidence of 'racial progress', Whites perceive threat and experience lower levels of control as a control group (Mutz 2018: 4337). Mutz's findings are consistent with those of Craig & Richeson (2014a) in that we find that increased levels of threat led to greater levels of Republican support. Overall, changes in time over items related to racial threat, vis-a-vis economic anxiety, were 'far more influential' as predictors in vote change towards greater support for Trump (Mutz 2018: 4338).

The "threat" literature also focuses on the exploitation of dominant group anxieties by right-wing populist political actors such as Trump. For instance, Bonikowski (2017) argues that tendencies generally considered hallmarks of populist sentiment in the literature (for example anti-immigrant) from contemporary radical political actors are actually hallmarks of ethnonationalism. Ethnonationalism prioritises ascriptive, immutable criteria such as race to dominant group membership, while emphasising exclusionary political behaviours such as nativism, xenophobia and religious intolerance (Bonikowski 2017: 187).

Ethnonationalist majority fears are likewise expressions of collective status threat. More specifically, the effects of these changes are seen as 'impugning on the life chances, dignity and moral commitments of in-group members' (Bonikowski 2017: 201). However, what makes these changes especially salient is that they can be mobilised into political cleavages. Right-wing political actors use these cleavages to their electoral advantage by fuelling a 'politics of resentment' (Bonikowski: 2017: 184). Resentment is fired towards non-dominant group members such as racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants (Hooghe and Dassonneville 2018).

The fact that these are ethnonationalist hallmarks rather than populist hallmarks explains why, when Mudde's (2007) framework is used, Bonikowski (2017) finds that the supply and demand sides of populism have remained relatively stable in an era of tremendous electoral success for radical right political actors (197). Mudde's (2007) supply/demand side schema, while seminal in the study of populism, is nonetheless deficient when attempting to account for Trump's victory, Bonikowski (2017) argues, since it misses a statistically independent dimension related to the degree of resonance of various political frames and corresponding popular attitudes.

In classic framing theory, resonance is a cultural process that shapes a social movement's ability to mobilise its supporters around a core message (Goffman 1974; Fairhurst and Sarr 1996). In this way, framing theory tends to see popular beliefs as static, and their "activation" dependent on the right message. However, Bonikowski (2017) proposes that resonance is a more fluid and dynamic process (193). Bonikowski (2017) posits that resonance involves feedback effects whereby "solutions" encoded in frames serve to generate or reinforce similar popular fears the impact of about demographic change. Seen in this way, Bonikowski (2017) contends that Trump's ethnonationalist discourse led white

Americans to connect their fears associated with America's changing demographics with their latent attitudes and support a candidate that offered radical solutions (193)

Importantly, change is threatening to some but not all white Americans; a qualification that Bonikowski (2017) and Mutz (2018) omit. In a social-psychological study of white American voting behaviour in the 2016 election, Major et al. (2018) found that white Americans' responses to increasing racial diversity depended on how strongly they identified with their ethnic group (937). Whites in high ethnic identification with their group shifted towards Trump, whereas Whites in low ethnic identification with their group become less positive towards Trump. Concurring with Craig and Richeson (2014a), Major et al. (2018) observe that as white Americans' numerical majority keeps shrinking, White identity concerns are becoming increasingly salient in affecting white Americans' voter preferences. While previously disregarded in research on White voting behaviour (Sears and Savalei 2006), America's current political events indicate this is no longer the case.

However, a critical limitation of the "threat" literature is that it uses 'ideas of [W]hite racial identity and mobilisation without mentioning [Whites] specifically' (Wong and Cho, 2005: 700). In the contemporary literature on ethnic identity/group consciousness in America, the dominant focus is on the status of minorities such as Asian Americans and Hispanics (Utsey et al. 2002; Sanchez 2006; Masuoka 2006). An 'implicit comparison, control group or counterfactual in many of these studies is White American', note Wong and Cho (2005: 700).

The omission of white Americans in both strands of literature is problematic for two reasons. First, a comparison point is needed with other races to understand how racial identity applies to 'all racial groups' and when (and under what) circumstances it behaves differently (Wong and Cho 2005: 701). Second, White Americans' changing numerical majority status affects levels of White racial self-identification (Wong and Cho 2005: 701). White identity has become politically relevant, and scholars must have the opportunity to study how white

racial identity has changed as America has become more diverse (Wong and Cho, 2005: 701). Addressing the lack of broader understanding of the role that white ethnoracial identity may play in driving higher levels of perceived threat is thus vital if we are to understand the salient factors that explain why 54 per cent of White Americans voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). Consequently, the following subsection turns to examine the conceptualisation and construction of white ethnoracial identity. Specifically, the next section also examines how the formulation of a collective white ethnoracial identity feeds into political mobilisation of white Americans around radical right social movements and political parties.

White Identity and Support for the Radical Right

Conceptualisations of White identity in the empirical literature hinge on two competing theories - colour-blindness and White privilege. Colour-blindness contends that White Americans have little-to-no race consciousness and are unaware of themselves as "whites". Such conceptualisations claim whiteness to be a 'sense of self and subjectivity… unaware of its social foundations (Hartmann et al. 2009). The notion of "invisibility" is thus implied in works which reference "colour-blind racism" (Carr 1997; Bonilla-Silva 2006). Findings from the psychology literature add weight to the conceptual foundations of colour-blindness through the construction of validation and measurement instruments for individual racial identification and attitudes (Neville et al. 2013). While the empirical findings of psychological studies also buttress the case for colour-blindness, such studies have relatively small sample sizes (Gushue and Constantine 2007), limiting their effectiveness in observing larger populations.

The second theory, White privilege, concerns whether whites possess an awareness of the structural advantages that their race affords them. Whiteness in this respect plays an

integral role in enabling whites, as the dominant group, to maintain their position atop the ethnoracial hierarchy. The crux in the literature is whether Whites are aware of these advantages. The straightforward answer is that whites are unaware and therefore cannot acknowledge their advantaged position (Roediger 1999). The more nuanced answer is that Whites are aware of the consequences of racial inequalities generated by unequal hierarchies (Solomona et al. 2005) yet cannot place themselves within a system of race relations to see how their structural advantages perpetuate the struggles of nondominant group members. However, as Hartmann et al. (2009) point out, quantifying Whites' awareness of white privilege is 'impossible', since the action involves pointing out awareness in the question itself (407).

For reasons noted, nationally representative data are scarce to test the validity of colour-blindness and white-privilege and their relation to formulations of White identity in America today. Some scholars, however, have attempted to fill the gap. For example, Torkelson & Hartmann (2010) use survey data from the American Mosaic Project (AMP) to measure the comparative effects of racial/ethnic identity on White Americans (1316–1317). To assess the strength of white Americans' ethnic identification, survey participants were tallied and categorised as "salient" or "nominally" white ethnic. Torkelson and Hartmann (2010) found that ethnic whites were 'not aligned with colorblind ideologies' (1324). While ethnicity did not have a subsequent influence of the racial ideologies of white Americans, it was correlated with increased levels of Whites' awareness of their own racial identities (Torkelson and Hartmann 2010: 1325). However, the population of whites who identify as being ethnically white was rather small. Only 14% of all whites identified as white ethnic, with only half of those holding a salient identity (Torkelson and Hartmann 2010: 1321).

Likewise, Wong and Cho (2005) use American National Election Studies (ANES) datasets to analyse individual psychological attachment to one's in-group to gauge how levels

of racial self-identification among Whites and African Americans varied between 1972 and 2000. They found that African Americans had consistently high levels of self-identification between 1972 and 2000 (76–87%), with only 11% maximum variance between any given reference point (Wong and Cho 2005: 705). Conversely, White Americans levels of racial self-identification fluxed over time (41%–75%), with a maximum variance of 34% between any given reference point (Wong and Cho 2005: 705). While White identity did exist and affected out-group attitudes to other races, they noted that it had not yet become a 'politicised [sic] identity' in 2000 (Wong and Cho, 2005: 716). Nonetheless, there was a 'danger' that white identity, while in an unstable state, could be 'easily triggered' by a 'demagogue' (Wong and Cho, 2005: 716).

Indeed, a paper presented by Sides et al. (2017) indicates that there is evidence that Trump "activated" white American group consciousness in the 2016 election. Using longitudinal panel data from the 2004 National Politics Study and the 2012 American National Election Study (ANES), they found a negative relationship between perceptions of discrimination against White Americans and voter choice for the Republican candidate in the 2004 and 2012 presidential elections respectively (Sides et al. 2017: 16–17).

By 2016, however, this had begun to change. Using similar datasets, the authors report a 'significant relationship' between perceptions of white discrimination and higher levels of support for Trump (Sides et al. 2017: 17). This paper is significant because it indicates that the activation of white group consciousness, previously considered dormant in earlier elections is dependent on electoral candidates who highlight the purported "threat" posed to white Americans by non-white ethnoracial groups. While previous right-wing presidential nominees and candidates used similar tactics in previous polls[7] Trump's activation of White group consciousness is noteworthy because he won his election whereas Wallace and

[7] For instance, George Wallace in 1968 and Pat Buchanan in 1996.

Buchanan did not. The data thus suggests that the activation of white group consciousness has the potential to be a dominant force in the mass mobilisation of white Americans in future polls if it leads to electoral victory.

Most notoriously in the American context, White ethnoracial identity has been the mobilising force behind white supremacist/nationalist movements. The sociology literature has long explored the relationship of White identity as the basis for collective action. Well-known examples of such formations include the Ku Klux Klan and White militia movements (Kimmel and Ferber 2009) as well as more contemporary White nationalist movements such as the Alt-Right (Hawley 2017; Niewert 2017). As social movements, they provide 'concrete' organisations and institutions within which collective White identities are formed (McDermott and Samson, 2005: 255). These identities are often realised through the creation of a space where a collective sense of group belonging can be fostered, allowing members to imagine a 'larger White community,' as well as through the dissemination of 'cultural markers' that signal white supremacist ideas (McDermott and Samson 2005: 255). Examples include hooded costumes in the case of the Ku Klux Klan, and Pepe the Frog in the case of the Alt-Right

Nonetheless, there is a tendency to conflate these fringe groups with more mainstream social and political movements around which white Americans coalesce. This is problematic because, despite their relatively small membership bases, white supremacist/nationalist movements have been afforded a 'comparatively large role' in scholarly definitions of white racial identity (McDermott and Samson 2005: 253). This observation, as well as the 'ignominious history' of White supremacy in America have created 'underlying normative bias' tying expressions of white racial identity to 'pathological… Jim-Crow style racism' (Weller and Junn 2018: 439).

Weller and Junn (2018) argue that there are other ways of thinking about White identity in light of Trump's robust base of White support. The authors do not see white voters as voting against their material interests by voting for the Republican Party. Rather, by combining a rational choice voting perspective with a social psychological approach, they conceptualise white racial self-identification as a utility-based trait affecting voting and electoral candidate preferences (Weller and Junn, 2018: 437). Seen in this way, White Americans' perceptions of their own "whiteness" may be distributed across the cohort in ways identifiable and quantifiable in systematic survey data (Weller and Junn, 2018: 439–440).

To summarise the cultural decline section, we have seen that as America has become more diverse, scholars have studied how white Americans have reacted to change - for example through expressions of threat/fear of status loss. However, such analyses go no further, and they have not examined how such reactions are endemic of modifications in intra/intergroup behaviour related to the underlying changes caused by diversity. This is an essential limitation of the data, because it ignores a growing body of literature primarily interested in ethnoracial American intergroup relations in an era of increasing diversity; America is becoming more ethnoracially diverse at an increasingly fast rate due to historically high levels of immigration and low White birth rates. If indeed whites do see themselves as an ethnoracial group and vote as such, then an examination of this literature is especially relevant. This is because it provides a greater contextual awareness of the data presented in studies of the cultural backlash thesis. The inclusion of this body of literature in the review is thus justified if we are to, while remaining consistent with the research question, understand why 54 percent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016. Consequently, the chapter now turns to examine the literature which explores the effects of increasing diversity on the robustness of US ethnoracial intergroup relations.

The Implications of a Changing America for White Americans

No historic "wave" of immigration to the United States has changed the country's demographic makeup more so than the 1965 Immigration Act. Under the 1965 Immigration act, immigrants of nationalities were on an even footing for admittance into the United States whereas they had not been before. In just a short time, this new immigration, predominately from Central and Latin America as well as Asia, has radically altered the racial and demographic composition of America. In 1960, 85% of the population was non-Hispanic white. By 2016, this number was 61%. Meanwhile, Hispanics made up 3% of the population in 1960, and by 2016, this had increased to 18%. Likewise, Asians made up 1% of the population in 1965 and 6% by 2015. A study by the Pew Research Center (2015: 9) indicates that without passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, the composition of America would be markedly different today: 75% would be non-Hispanic White, 14% would be African American, 8% would be Hispanic and Asian would make up less than 1%. If these trends continue as projected, non-Hispanic Whites will only constitute a plurality of the population by 2055 (Pew Research Center 2015: 10).

A History of American Nativism

The data presented leads us into our first subsection of the "changing America" section. This subsection elucidates the history of nativist movements and nativist literature in the United States. Elucidation of the history of nativist movements and nativist literature before 1965 indicates that Americans have long expressed uneasiness toward new immigrants. This uneasiness fed into Congressional legislative agendas and scholarly thinking in the early Twentieth Century. The 1965 Immigration Act superseded the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act. Under Johnson-Reed, national origin quotas excluded specific European groups. Such groups

included Italians, Slavs and Polish Jews. The overwhelming majority of immigrants who had come to America under these quotas were from Northern and Western Europe. The passing of the Johnson-Reed Act was primarily a reaction to the influx of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe at the turn of the 19th Century.

The "second wave" of immigration resulted in a surge of nativist sentiment. Nativists of the time were concerned that "America" was not defined in a meaningful way. A concern that America lacked a unified national culture or identity was central to the development of nativist thinking. While immigration levels during this period reflected demands for cheap labour by big business (Dubofsky 2013: 351), it increasingly became seen by nativists as a major threat. For nativists, immigration restriction was seen as a way to preserve "America" (Friedman 2017; Bouie 2018). However, their conception of America was essentially a cultural monist one—by America, they meant the White, Anglo-Saxon culture of Colonial times. As Kallen (1916) puts it, the masses of white English men in the colonies were seen by nativists as being possessed of 'ethnic and cultural unity', homogenous with respect to 'ancestry and ideals' (191). Such racial overtures were blatant in pseudo-scientific nativist works of the time. In the Passing of the Great Race, for instance, Grant considers American culture racially determined as opposed by other indicators such as language or values (Higham 2002: 156). Grant feared that mixing with "lesser" groups (i.e., non-English white immigrants) would lessen the quality of 'Nordic' (Anglo-Saxon) stock, ultimately leading to a diminished America. Slavs were one such group believed to be racially inferior to Anglo Saxons (Roucek 1969: 35).

In Trans-National America, an article remarkable for its optimistic internationalist fervour amidst the prevailing nationalist sentiment during the First World War, Bourne was fiercely critical of the nativists' conceptualisation of "Americanization" for retaining essentially "Teutonic" or Anglo-Saxon conditions of assimilation. Bourne sees America as a

‘cosmopolitan federation of national colonies [and] foreign cultures, from whom the sting of devastating competition has been removed’. The American fold has a cosmopolitan spirit. There are ‘no… masses of aliens waited to be assimilated… into the dough of Anglo-Saxonism’, but rather ‘threads of living… cultures… striving to weave themselves into a[n] international nation’ (Bourne 1916). America shall be ‘what the immigrant [has] a hand in making it’ not what those ‘descendant of… British stocks… decide that America shall be made’ (Bourne 1916).

Cultural Assimilation

Competing theories of cultural assimilation began to emerge as a reaction against the ideas of authors of the nativist literature. Israel Zangwill’s 1908 play *The Melting Pot* tells the story of David Quixano, a Jewish immigrant who comes to America from Russia after his entire family is killed in the Kishinev pogrom. Quixano writes a symphony espousing his hope for a world in which ethnic divisions have “melted” away. By all accounts historical reception to Zangwill’s play was enthusiastic. *The Melting Pot* presented an ideal ‘that was attractive to many Americans’ (Shumsk 1975: 29) and was operationalised into a sociological theory that accounted for the assimilation and transformation of different ethnic and religious groups into Americans sharing a common culture, developing common attitudes, values and lifestyles.

Scholars began to discredit the melting pot theory as early as the late Forties. Early studies pointed to the fact that assimilation of immigrants along religious lines had not occurred. Analysing longitudinal marriage data over 70 years, Kennedy found that religious endogamy among Protestant, Catholic and Jewish individuals residing in New Haven was rampant (Kennedy 1944: 332). Kennedy argued that the single melting pot theory must be ‘abandoned’ and replaced by the ‘triple melting pot theory’ (Kennedy 1944: 332). In a similar

study a decade later, Herberg (1983) concurred that the three great faiths in the United States constituted a triple melting pot. Until the sixties, the majority of scholarly works on American integration were 'explicitly or implicitly based' on melting pot theory (Bisin and Verdier 2000: 955). However, theoretical developments in the sociology literature during the sixties disregarded the theory for describing interethnic relations in the United States (Gordon 1964). For example, the seminal work of Glazer and Moynihan (1963) observed that ethnic assimilation was at best preceding very slowly. The five respective groups of interest in their enquiry, African Americans, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish, retained their distinctive cultural patterns long after making port in New York.

Another theory that emerged amidst the surge of nativist sentiment at the time of the First World War was Kallen's (1916) theory of cultural pluralism. Instead of assimilating by "melting-down", the idea was that different ethnic groups instead co-existed in their separate identities much like the ingredients in a salad bowl, bound only by the "dressing" of America's democratic values and institutions. Kallen (1916) places emphasis on the inherent value of the ethnic and cultural differences of migrants, using Switzerland as an example of being 'the most successful democracy in the world' despite their 'language, literary and spiritual conditions' being German, Italian and French in equal measure (220). While "Americanization" denotes the adoption of 'English speech, of American clothes and manners, [and] the American attitude in politics' by new arrivals, the process does not change the importance of those fundamental cultural and ethnic distinctions (Kallen 1916: 192). For one can change their 'clothes, politics… religions and philosophies', but not their grandfathers (Kallen 1916: 220).

Berry's (1997) theory of acculturation presents a more theoretically sophisticated contemporary formulation of how various ethnoracial groups interact with one another in increasingly diverse societies. Berry observes that societies become more culturally plural

(diverse) as a result of immigration (Berry 1997: 8). Cultural groups within society are unequal in terms of the power (numerical, political, economic) they wield (Berry 1997: 8). These power differences have given rise to the notion of majority/minority and dominant/nondominant groups in the contemporary social science literature (Islam and Hewstone 1993; Binder et al. 2009). In all pluralist societies, both dominant and nondominant groups 'must deal' with how to acculturate (Berry 1997 9). Acculturation in its simplest definition is, therefore, the process by which one cultural group comes into 'continuous first-hand contact' with another (Redfield et al. 1936: 149). As America has become more culturally diverse, the interaction between its constituent groups has become an increasingly important factor in people's everyday lives. Dominant/nondominant groups must devise what Berry (1997) terms 'acculturation strategies' (9). These strategies are devised concerning two major considerations — first, cultural maintenance, or the process of valuing and preserving one's own cultural identity. Second, contact and participation, or the level of involvement with the host culture or dominant cultural group (Berry 1997: 9).

Assimilation is only successful when people can do so freely. If they are forced to, 'it becomes like a pressure cooker', Berry (1997) observes (9). Likewise, integration can only be freely chosen and well-pursued by nondominant groups when those in the dominant group are 'open and inclusive in [their] orientation towards cultural diversity' (Berry 1997: 10). The data on these conditions are striking among white Americans. Forty-three percent think those immigrating to the United States are making the country worse in the long run compared to 41% who do not (Pew Research Center 2015: 53). Conversely, African Americans and Hispanics both think immigrants have a positive impact. Many Americans also think today's immigrants are not assimilating. It is the perception of two-thirds of white Americans that immigrants 'want to hold on to their home country customs and way of life', while only 32% think they want to adopt American customs (Pew Research Center 2015: 14). White

Americans are also likely to hold more negative views on immigrants who mostly came after the 1965 Immigration Act. For example, over 72% say immigrants of Latin American origin have made a neutral or negative impact on American society (Pew Research Center 2015: 14).

Diversity and Social Trust

It is not just that White Americans hold low levels of trust towards post-1965 immigrants. Across the board, there is evidence that their trustworthiness is decreasing in everyone (Rahn and Transue 1998; Robinson and Jackson 2001). Trust is the bedrock of what social scientists call social capital. 'It is hard to think of any form of social capital that could exist without trust', notes Murray (2012: 251). Low levels of social trust are endemic of lower levels of social capital. Specific dimensions of social capital, such as political and religious participation, are tangible and are statistically measurable using specific indicators. Examples of these indicators include rates of participation in political organisations and church attendance (Putnam, 2000: 43–71). Trust, however, is somewhat intangible and thus harder to quantify. Therefore, the crux of the matter is how we take an abstract concept such as trust and operationalise it into a statistically measurable and observable phenomenon.

Many studies examining levels of social and civic trust in America use data from the General Social Survey (GSS), which has asked variations of the same question on trustworthiness since the survey's inception in 1972 (Kawachi et al. 1997; Putnam 2000). Until recently, however, there has been a paucity of research on the levels of trust between America's racial and ethnic groups and white Americans specifically. One of the few analyses comes from Murray (2012). In Coming Apart, Murray (2012) pared down into the GSS attitudinal data on social trust going back to the early seventies. Murray (2012) found that the estimations of Whites aged 30–49 living in less-affluent, blue-collar communities on

the issues of trustworthiness, fairness and the helpfulness of others had crumbled between 1970 and 2010 (252–254). Murray (2012) does not affix chief responsibility to any particular variable to explain the precipitous decline in social trust among white Americans. However, he observes that social trust seems to be declining most precipitously in communities where ethnic heterogeneity is on the rise.

Indeed, a substantial body of evidence in the social capital literature shows that increasing diversity can have adverse effects on the levels of social capital within communities (Letki 2008; Fieldhouse and Cutts 2010; Portes and Vickstrom 2011). Putnam's (2007) *E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century* is the most well-known study on the adverse effects of diversity. The literature before Putnam (2007) shows two divergent strands in social capital. These are conflict theory and contract theory (Allport 1979; Sherif et al. 1988). Conflict theory contends that diversity enhances the in-group/out-group distinction and strengthens in-group solidarity (or bonding social capital), thus increasing ethnocentrism (Putnam 2007: 144). Contrastingly, contact theory contends that diversity erodes the in-group/out-group distinction and enhances out-group solidarity (or bridging social capital), thus lowering ethnocentrism (Allport 1979: 144). Since Allport (1979) formulated contact theory, much research has shown that positive group contact experiences towards groups such as the elderly (Caspi 1984) and those with disabilities (Yuker and Hurley 1987) resulted in reduced levels of self-reported group prejudice.

Though contact theory and conflict theory have been compared against one another in the academic literature for over four decades, conflict theory is essentially an extension of contact theory under less-than-ideal conditions. Before Putnam's study, virtually none of the hundreds of empirical enquiries had ever attempted to quantify in-group attitudes. Instead, they measured positive or negative out-group attitudes, merely assuming that in-group attitudes vary inversely. Consequently, they presumed that their measurements of out-group

attitudes were measures of ethnocentrism. Putnam (2007) puts forward a thesis he terms 'constrict theory', contending that diversity, at least in the 'short-to-medium term', reduces both in-group and out-group solidarity (144). Putnam's findings demonstrate a 'strong positive relationship between inter-racial trust and ethnic homogeneity' (2007: 147).

Ethnically diverse communities thus experience lower levels of social trust than those that are more homogenous. Prima facie, this is an admonition of conflict theory, but Putnam's findings are more complex, with Putnam (2007) finding that ethnocentric trust is 'completely uncorrelated' with ethnic diversity (148). The effect on diversity on intragroup relations was even starker in his findings. It was not, as Putnam said, that people were only distrusting of those whose race or ethnicity was different from their own; they did not even trust members of their group. Colloquially, people in ethnically diverse communities tend to 'hunker down' (Putnam, 2007: 137). Kaufmann and Goodwin (2018) call the phenomena of the withdrawal of whites from community participation under conditions of increasing ethnic heterogeneity an 'exit route' (12). This "exit route" has been the subject of empirical scrutiny since Putnam's (2007) analysis (Van Der Meer and Tolsma 2014). However, the 'voice' route, in which native-born whites express negative attitudes towards increasing diversity, and subsequently vote for right-wing populist actors, has not been examined to the same depth (Kaufmann and Goodwin 2018: 120).

Kaufmann and Goodwin (2018) address this gap by performing a meta-analysis of 171 articles that explore conditions of increasing ethnic heterogeneity and opposition to immigration, and how the two relate to support for anti-immigrant party platforms. They find that over 70 percent of studies report that community heterogeneity primes threat, thus increasing levels of opposition to immigration and electoral support for the anti-immigrant

parties among native Whites (Kaufman & Goodwin 2018: 130).[8] These observations are important because a host of Western democracies are becoming diverse at an increasingly fast rate (Kaufmann 2018). Consequently, as our democracies become more diverse, support for anti-immigrant parties – at least the micro and marco levels - might increase too.

Conclusion

An important lacuna in the existing scholarship relates to a lack of broader comparative awareness of the various factors that contributed to Trump's unlikely victory in the 2016 US Presidential election. In the previous chapter, I have argued that this is a critical omission, because without such evidence we are unable to tell whether Trump's victory on the part of White voters is best explained by existing frameworks that have long explained voter behaviour - for instance, voter concerns related to rational choice economic voting and upward mobility (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000). Equally, however, the unprecedented salience of xenophobic and racist overtures during the 2016 campaign could be indicative of the successful electoral mobilization of a cohort of White voters that are increasingly concerned about cultural and socio-cultural issues (Norris and Inglehart 2019). We need to understand what Trump's victory means in light of these developments. This is so that we are able to better understand whether Trump's victory is simply an aberration, or whether his victory might be indicative of a broader trend of White voter re-alignment in which such voters are now resistant to the existing offers of mainstream politicians and political elites (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018).

[8] When it comes to diversity levels, however, the relationship between community heterogeneity and threat perceptions was found to be nonlinear. Crucially, this nonlinear relationship took the form of a diversity "wave," whereby greater community heterogeneity predicted threat at the micro and marco community levels, while at the meso level – for instance, in Census tracts or neighbourhoods of between 5,000 to 10,000 people - diversity was associated with reduced threat (Kaufmann and Goodwin 2018).

The present literature review speaks to the lack of broader comparative awareness in the extant literature. Despite the burgeoning number of scholarly works on the 2016 US Presidential election, there is no single or authoritative work which attempts to understand which factors or set of factors that created the currents for Trump's unlikely victory. Nonetheless, by trifurcating accounts for Trump's victory into three broader explanatory contexts, we can begin to better conceptualize whether 2016 was emblematic of a White voter realignment or, equally, of "revolt" against the political elites in Washington.

As of yet, this doctoral thesis makes no claims as to which of these explanatory contexts ("left behind" thesis, cultural decline thesis, changing America thesis) is the most robust in contributing to our existing understanding of White voter behaviour in 2016. However, it is important to note that the literature review chapter functions as an important bridge between the purely theoretical understandings of Trump's victory and the empirical study of White voter behaviour that is to follow in the upcoming chapters. Now that we have a better theoretical approximation of these three explanatory contexts, therefore, it is now possible to begin to probe their empirical robustness and validity as frames for understanding why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballots for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). To begin to test the empirical robustness of the three explanatory contexts, it is crucial that we have a sound methodological foundation underpinning guiding research investigation. Consequently, Chapter 3 will unpack the broader methodological approach underpinning the doctoral thesis.

Chapter 3: Modelling Presidential Vote Choice

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the extant literature on White vote choice for Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election. This review revealed three significant explanatory contexts that explain the vote choice of Whites in 2016. These are: **i**) the "left behind" thesis, **ii**) the cultural decline thesis; and (**iii**) the changing America thesis. To test the robustness of these explanatory contexts as frames through which we can better understand why 54 per cent of White Americans voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018), this chapter provides an outline of the methodological approach underpinning the doctoral thesis. The thesis adopts a quantitative research design and analyses secondary cross-sectional survey data to empirically investigate whether the three explanatory contexts are robust frames for understanding White vote choice. The chapter will detail why a quantitative design was adopted to investigate the research aims, any issues that might arise from the use of secondary survey data, and will detail the sample, sources of data, the modelling strategy, and model robustness.

The chapter begins with a reflection on the onto-epistemological approach underpinning the theoretical orientation of the doctoral thesis, outlining why positivism was chosen as the preferred research paradigm to investigate the hypotheses. Having outlined the broader theoretical approach underpinning the investigation, the chapter then unpacks the methodology and research strategy. Afterward, the chapter turns to discuss sources of data and the sampling strategy. The chapter then outlines the modelling strategy that will be used to assess vote choice, providing an overview of the baseline socio-demographic and structural covariates that will be used in the vote choice models. The chapter will also consider additional factors that might influence vote choice but were nonetheless not included as

parameters in the baseline model. Finally, the chapter concludes with a reflection on the methods employed to investigate the research aims and lays the groundwork for the first principal findings chapter in which the robustness of the "left behind" thesis as a frame for understanding White vote choice will be tested.

Onto-Epistemological Considerations

Research paradigms in the study of the social sciences are underpinned by assumptions that researchers claim to know about the world, including what hypotheses should be investigated, and how these hypotheses are tested (Kuhn 1962). Research paradigms are compared with one another on three bases (Guba 1990). These are the ontological, or claims as to the nature of reality itself; the epistemological, concerning how we know what we know about the world, as well as the forms that this knowledge takes; and the methodological, concerning the instruments that researchers use to acquire this knowledge. Given that ontology and epistemology are the bases on which research is built, it is important that we first have a substantive approximation of the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning the doctoral thesis. This is so that we are able to better understand the methodological choices used to investigate why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018).

Ontology is primarily concerned with understanding the overall nature of the existence of a given phenomenon. In seeking answers to the research questions posed by the doctoral thesis specifically, I am referring to a particular kind of knowledge that exists external to myself as a researcher that is investigating vote choice for Trump. It is important to note that this notion of "reality" may apply to an approximation of the world that is real and independent from knowledge (positivism), or, equally, to the notion that the world is socially constructed (constructivism) (Schwandt 1994). The main paradigmatic distinction

underpinning the social sciences has been between positivism on the one hand, and constructivism on the other. To the positivist researcher, the answers to why so many White Americans voted for Trump are "out there" waiting to be discovered. By contrast, to the constructivist researcher, answers to questions concerning electoral behaviour may be are subjective to each White voter.

From these ontological positions, researchers make epistemological decisions to address the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge. More specifically, these decisions pertain to the possible ways of how researchers gain knowledge about reality. Positivists assume that reality can be measured. As such, positivist researchers place emphasis on valid and reliable tools to obtain knowledge about reality. Consequently, positivism is associated with quantitative research strategies that are used to obtain knowledge. Statistical techniques are especially central to positivist research, which adheres to structured techniques to uncover knowledge about objective reality. For instance, a positivist researcher assessing vote choice for Trump would assume that Whites' electoral behaviour is explained by a number of factors that can be robustly approximated by a vote choice model (Mutz 2018; Schaffner et al. 2018; Valentino et al. 2018; Reny & Collingwood 2019). In light of these considerations, the doctoral thesis will adopt a positivist research paradigm to assess vote choice for Trump. Having delineated the onto-epistemological approach (positivism) underpinning the doctoral thesis, the chapter now turns to discuss the specific methodology and methods employed to conduct the research.

Methodology

This section provides an outline of the methodological approach underpinning the doctoral thesis. The specific research strategy employed to investigate the research aims are derived from the positivist onto-epistemological considerations delineated in the previous

section. Accordingly, the doctoral thesis has adopted a quantitative research strategy to investigate why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). An elucidation of why a quantitative approach was adopted over a qualitative approach is the primary focus of this section.

As discussed in the previous chapter, contemporary ethnographies of Whites' political behaviour that were seen as especially important works in the aftermath of Trump's unlikely victory have not been treated as partial accounts of why Trump won (Vance 2016; Gest 2016; Hochshild 2018). One concern related to these aforenoted ethnographic narratives about White political behaviour in the Trump era relates to the ways in which such works have become essential tenets of explanations for Trump's victory, often exceeding the scope of academic works that aim to assess vote choice for Trump in a more robust, empirical fashion.[9] One of the major risks of over-emphasing these narratives concerning the importance of the White-working class to Trump's victory is that explanations rooted in the "left behind" thesis have become pervasive without robust empirical comparison to the cultural decline thesis and the changing America thesis.

Given that the principal research objective is to understand which dimension of White estrangement Trump's unlikely victory best represents, it was therefore imperative to adopt a methodological approach that aims to account for the various dimensions of support for Trump in a systematic fashion. Whereas qualitative research methodologies interpret social reality through emphasising the importance of the subjective experiences of individuals, quantitative methodologies function as a means of providing a more systematic account of social reality. Given the aforenoted concerns with qualitative works on White voters, a

[9] It is also useful to note that the specific socio-demographic categories that have been mobilised in these ethnographic works – specifically those of "left behind," working-class Whites – are, themselves, constructed. Indeed, the categories that are developed in these works rely on a series of motifs that are consistent with contemporary conceptualizations of working-class Whiteness, including race, education, and geography (Cramer 2016; Vance, 2016 Williams 2017).

quantitative design was therefore adopted as the methodological approach to meet the overall objectives of the doctoral thesis.

Quantitative research methodologies are strongly associated with the positivist research paradigm. As such, researchers use objective, logical, and systematic methods of analysis that allow for the accumulation of knowledge. Researchers adopting a quantitative approach gather statistical data, and will analyse data using a variety of empirical methods with the objective of yielding results that are generalizable to a wider population. Just as there are a number of ethnographies that attest to the subjective experiences of White voters (Gest 2016; Vance 2016; Hochschild 2018), there are an equal number of studies that adopt a quantitative methodological approach to investigate White vote choice for Trump (Schaffner et al. 2018; Whitehead et al. 2018; Reny and Collingwood 2018; Setzler and Yanus 2018). The consistent thread running through all of these quantitative studies is that they test a series of hypotheses that are associated with a variety of causal explanations for why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump (Pew Research Center 2018).

Quantitative methods use "deductive reasoning" in order to extract conclusions from research hypotheses (Johnson-Laird 1999). The deductive approach involves developing a hypothesis (or a set of hypotheses) based on the existing literature, and then deploying a variety of empirical methods to test the theoretical expectations of the study. This process is useful because it allows researchers to investigate causal relationships between hypotheses and variables of interest. Crucially, quantitative methods allow researchers to operationalise key constructs of interest into statistically measurable phenomena, meaning that researchers are able to empirically test the robustness of their theory against the existing literature.

The vote choice literature is replete with examples of the deductive reasoning process. For instance, Whitehead et al. (2018) hypothesize that Christian nationalism – a belief system that emphasises the importance of America's Christian heritage- was an independent

predictor of vote choice that mobilised Whites to cast their ballot for Trump.[10] The authors situate their theory within the existing vote choice literature, outlining where Christian nationalism intersects with and distinguishes from other predictors of vote choice. The authors then use survey data to operationalise Christian nationalism into a statistically-measurable construct. The item for Christian nationalism is then entered a series of vote choice models in order to test the robustness of their explanation against other predictors that are known to be closely associated with vote choice for Trump (Whitehead et al. 2018). The sum of these types of analyses are that researchers investigating vote choice with set of specific hypotheses are able to make robust inferences about Trump's particular appeal among White voters.

A vast array of different methods and designs are available to researchers in quantitative research. There are four main types of quantitative research, these are descriptive analysis, correlational analysis, causal-comparative/quasi-experimental analysis, and experimental analysis. Descriptive analysis aims to provide a systemic approximation about the status of an identified variable. Researchers do not begin with a hypothesis a priori. Rather, they are likely to develop a hypothesis after collecting the data. The test of the hypothesis then emerges in the analysis and critical synthesis of the data. Some studies of the vote choice literature have adopted this approach. For instance, McQuarrie (2017) utilised a descriptive design to investigate 2016 vote choice in Rust Belt counties. Here, McQuarrie analysed election data to probe trends in turnout and shifts in partisan preferences between 2012 and 2016 in predominately White working-class areas of the Industrial Midwest. Analysis of these trends led McQuarrie (2017) to hypothesise that sharp declines in African American turnout, as well as Trump's strong showing in overwhelmingly White and blue-collar communities contributed to Clinton's defeat in the Industrial Midwest.

[10] Their hypothesis can thus be expressed as x (Christian nationalism) $\rightarrow y$ (Trump).

By contrast, correlational analysis aims to determine the extent of a relationship between two or more variables using statistical data. In correlational research designs, researchers aim to assess trends or patterns within the data, but do not go as far in their analysis as to prove causes for these observed relationships. Cause and effect are not the objective of analyses that use correlational data, since the data are "observed" only. As such, variables are not manipulated as is commonly the case in experimental data. Rather, they are only identified and studied.

Most studies of the vote choice literature have used survey data to determine the nature of the relationship between a given variable (x) and vote choice for Trump (y). For instance, Knuckey (2019) used survey data from the 2016 ANES to examine the relationship between sexist attitudes and opposition to Clinton in the general election. Using regression modelling, Knuckey established that sexist attitudes were statistically significant ($p < .05$) predictors of voters' opposition to Clinton. As indicated by the author, however, the findings were only 'suggestive' of the continued obstacles faced by female candidates when running for prominent positions in American politics (Knuckey 2019).

Distinct from correlational analyses, causal-comparative and quasi-experimental research methods are those that attempt to establish cause and effect relationships among a group of variables. These types of research designs are somewhat similar to "truly" experimental research designs, but nonetheless exhibit a number of key differences. One key difference is that independent variables are identified (as opposed to being manipulated) by the researcher, and thus the effects of x on y are measured. Another difference is that researchers do not randomly assign groups, and must therefore use pre-existing ones.[11] Identified control groups exposed to the treatment variable are studied and compared to the

[11] Usefully, statistical packages such as Stata contain a number of built-in features such as treatment effects and structural modelling, which allow researchers to apply quasi-experimental methods to survey data.

experimental group. When conclusions are derived from quasi-experimental analyses, determining any causal relation must be done with a degree of care because other variables (known as "confounders") may still affect the outcome.

Studies of the vote choice literature that adopt a quasi-experimental research design use a number of strategies to mitigate confounding. For instance, Mutz (2018) used a panel design to assess whether White voters who felt as though their dominant group status was under threat by immigrants and racial minorities were more likely to vote for Trump relative to Obama in 2012. Using panel regression, Mutz (2018) found that such voters were indeed likely to be Obama-Trump vote switchers. Though the study was not "truly" experimental, the panel design nonetheless mitigated much of the concern related to establishing causality that is common with the use of survey data.

The final type of quantitative method is experimental research designs. Often used interchangeably with the term "true" experimentation, these research designs attempt to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between a group of variables. In a "true" experiment, researchers identify and impose controls over all variables with the exception of the independent variable. The independent variable is manipulated to determine any effects on the dependent variable. In contrast to quasi-experimental methods, subjects are randomly assigned to the experimental treatments.

Though a relatively smaller number of studies of the vote choice literature have utilised experimental research designs to assess vote choice for Trump, we nonetheless find examples in the existing scholarship. For instance, Cassese and Holman (2019) used an experimental design to assess whether Trump's use of sexist attacks against Clinton in the general election mobilised voters with latent, sexist, attitudes. In their study, the authors found that hostile sexists exposed to the attack (the treatment condition) were more likely to endorse Trump relative to those who were not exposed to the attack (the control condition)

(Cassese & Holman 2019). These experimental results offered greater insight into the ways in which sexist attitudes shaped opposition to Clinton's candidacy by adding robust causal inference to studies which primarily adopted a correlational research design to investigate the relationship between sexism and vote choice (Knuckey 2019).

In light of these different quantitative research designs, the doctoral thesis adopts a correlational analytical approach. Given that the main objective of this doctoral thesis was to analyse the salient predictors of White vote choice for Trump, the thesis will attempt to quantify the degree of association between a given explanatory variable on the probability that a White voter will cast their ballot for Trump. Importantly, adopting a correlational analysis will allow me to **i)** assess the relative magnitude (or effect size) of a given predictor of vote choice relative to a host of socio-demographic and structural controls that are likely to be associated with vote choice, and **ii**) establish the relative statistical significance of a given predictor of vote choice. Crucially, once we have established the magnitude and significance of these predictors, the doctoral thesis will be able to better-discern which predictor (or predictors) were the most potent in explaining White vote choice for Trump. Having established the quantitative methodological approach underpinning the doctoral thesis, the chapter next turns to unpack the research designs that are common in quantitative analyses, and will outline the specific research design chosen for the thesis.

Research Design

The research design for the doctoral thesis can be conceptualized as the systemic plan and structure of the research process that aims to investigate why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). The research design functions as a means of allowing myself as a researcher to address the research aims and objectives underpinning the doctoral thesis as unambiguously as possible. Crucially, the research design will also provide

us with a robust framework for choosing the appropriate research methods to investigate vote choice for Trump, as well as decisions about the collection and analysis of data.

As is the case with the large number of methodological approaches underpinning quantitative research, there also are number of research designs available to researchers investigating vote choice for Trump. Examples of research designs include case and case series, cross sectional designs, cohort and longitudinal designs, and experimental designs. The doctoral thesis adopts a cross sectional design to investigate the research aims and objectives. Cross sectional analyses are defined by three essential features. These are **i)** no time dimension, **ii)** a reliance on existing difference within the data, as opposed to change following intervention, and **iii)** groups of participants that are selected based on existing differences, as opposed to random assignment. Consequently, the cross-sectional design will only measure differences between White respondents, as opposed to within-subject changes as would be the case with panel data.

The cross-sectional design captures information about the political and electoral behaviour of White Americans at a particular point in time during the 2016 election. This design is useful because it allows for the study of a relatively large number of White voters at points in time when issues important to voters are likely to be most potent – namely, immediately before or after the election. This feature of the research design is particularly important because the large sample sizes will allow us to draw robust inferences from the wider pool of White 2016 voters.

When considering which quantitative research design is the most appropriate in light of the research objectives, researchers of the White vote choice literature have often collected primary data (Mutz 2018). Primary data are data that are gathered to fulfil a specific research objective. Consequently, the research instrument is focussed on addressing the purpose and alignment of the research question, the planned analysis, and the proposed method of

collecting the data. The chief advantage of using primary data is that they are tailored to the specific aims of the study, and are available for analysis once gathered. Nonetheless, an important limitation of primary data is not only identifying the sample population, but also getting that population to respond (Lynn et al. 2008). Americans are constantly surveyed about a range of issues concerning voter behaviour and public opinion, but are often reticent of providing the time necessary to participate in academic research (Groves and Peytcheva 2008). In many cases, scholars have ended up with fewer responses than initially planned for their analyses, and as such have had to adapt their analyses to account for a reduced sample size.

An alternative approach is the use of secondary survey data. Secondary survey data refers to data that have been collected for a different purpose, but may nonetheless be useful in investigating the aims of different study. Just as scholars studying vote choice for Trump have used primary data to investigate their research aims, there are an equal number of studies that use secondary data (Hooghe and Dassonneville 2018; Schaffner et al. 2018; Setzler et al. 2018). These data are often publicly available online for academics and researchers, and include Census data and those from collaborating institutions with an interest in furthering knowledge in the social sciences.[12]

However, the central challenge with the use of secondary data centres around developing strategies to make the existing data fit the objectives and the research questions posed by the doctoral thesis. More specifically, these strategies often involve creating variables and measures that are robust and valid indicators of the various constructs that projects are interested in studying. Often, this requires transformation of the data, and creating constructs of interest by combining multiple indicators when the measures are not already present in the secondary survey datasets. At times, this strategy may also require a

[12] For instance, the University of Chicago/NORC General Social Survey (GSS).

degree of inventiveness - this can especially be the case when devising measures that serve as proxies for constructs of interest.

Having considered the advantages and disadvantages for both types of data, the doctoral thesis chose secondary data as the preferred source of data to investigate the research aims. Secondary data was primarily chosen because of the scope of breadth of the doctoral theses required a dataset that was sufficiently large enough to test the robustness of the three principal explanatory contexts delineated in the previous chapter. Importantly, this data strategy also mitigated much of the concern regarding missing data and non-response that is endemic in many analyses of Presidential vote choice (Whitehead et al. 2018). Despite these benefits however, a great deal more time was spent preparing, cleaning, and recoding the secondary survey data than would have otherwise been the case in a primary analysis. Nonetheless, the end result was a number of datasets that allowed me to better attest to the various dimensions of White estrangement that are likely to be associated with vote choice for Trump.

Consistent with the broader research objectives underpinning the doctoral thesis, analysis of cross-sectional, secondary survey data was thus adopted as the chosen research design. The use of secondary survey data is beneficial because it allows us to analyse a large sample of White 2016 voters, thus allowing for generalisability of results to the larger pool of White voters. Having delineated the research design underpinning the doctoral thesis, the chapter will next outline the sample population of interest to the analysis.

Sample

The sample population of the analysis is White Americans. Because the objective of the doctoral thesis is to examine the salient predictors of White vote choice for Trump, all subsequent multivariate models are thus estimated using a sample of respondents who

identify as White and non-Hispanic in the survey datasets.[13] Non-Hispanic White is an ethno-racial classification of the US Census Bureau. The US Census Bureau classifies race and ethnicity as distinct identities; when completing the Census form, respondents are asked two questions related to their race and ethnicity. In addition to being asked their race, respondents are also asked whether they are Hispanic or Latino. It is important to note that these categories are socio-political constructs that are manifestations of what Census respondents consider themselves to be (US Census Bureau, 2020). In this way, these racial and ethnic classifications are not intended to be scientific or anthropological conceptualizations but, rather, those that account for one's individual ancestry and socio-cultural characteristics.

A majority of White Americans trace their ancestry to Western and Northern Europe. White Americans are predominately descended from the English and Dutch settlers of North America that made the Atlantic crossing to the New World during the 16th and 17th Centuries (Jacobs, 2009; Shi & Tindall, 2016). By the time of the American Revolution, around 2.5 million Whites lived in the Colonies (Wells, 2015). Between the Revolution and the 1820s, there was relatively little immigration to the US. Starting after the 1820s, however, exponential growth in the White population was associated with significant increases in levels of immigration from Western and Northern Europe.

In addition to ancestry, White Americans are also characterised by their use of English.[14] While the term "White American" is sometimes used interchangeably with the notion of "Anglo American," it is important to note that Anglo Americans are in fact a sub-group of White Americans that are primarily descended from Great Britain (Kaufmann, 2004). Though many White Americans of non-English ancestry retained a degree of cultural traditionalism from their ancestral forebears (Bisin & Verdier, 2000), most second and third

[13] Hereinafter referred to as White, or White American.
[14] By contrast, a substantial majority of Whites of Hispanic and Latino origin speak Spanish as their primary language (US Census Bureau, 2020).

generation immigrants descended from first generation immigrants of the major waves of European migration speak English as their primary language today (US Census Bureau, 2020). Having defined "White American" so that we can better understand the sample population of the analysis, the methodology chapter now turns to the sources of data that will be used to model presidential vote choice in the upcoming chapters.

Sources of Data

In the upcoming chapters, the doctoral thesis relies on data taken from multiple national benchmark surveys to model White vote choice for Trump. The most common source of data used across chapters is the American National Election Survey (ANES). The use of the ANES is beneficial to investigate the research aims underpinning the doctoral thesis. This is because the dataset is considered the "gold standard" of national benchmark surveys for American electoral and political behaviour (ANES, 2020). The ANES is a large N national survey that has conducted interviews with Americans both on and before election day since the 1948 Presidential election. Given the large sample size and the survey weights that make results generalizable to the US adult population provided by the ANES, we can express a degree of confidence that the results of the models that use the White only sample are broadly representative of the White American populace.

As well as asking White respondents who they voted for, the ANES contains a number of useful items on public opinion of a range of issues. Therefore, the doctoral thesis primarily relies on the 2016 ANES Time Series Study. For the 2016 ANES, researchers conducted a series of face-to-face and online interviews across a pre and post-election wave in 2016. The face-to-face component of the 2016 ANES interviewed 797 White Americans. By contrast, the online component of the 2016 ANES consisted of 2,242 White Americans. The total sample of Whites from the 2016 ANES is 3,039.

In addition to the 2016 ANES, the doctoral thesis also turns to a number of additional national benchmark surveys to assess the vote choice of White Americans in 2016. The first of these additional sources is the Cooperative Congressional Election Survey (CCES). The 2016 CCES is a nationally representative survey that interviewed 64,000 US adults aged 18 or over across two waves. The 2016 pre-election wave of the survey was conducted between September 28 to November 7, and the post-election wave was conducted between November 9 to December 14. After sample selection, there was a total of N = 47,567 White respondents.

Lastly, data are also taken from the 2016 Voter Survey. The 2016 Voter Survey is an internet survey that surveyed N = 8,000 American adults aged 18 or over between 29th November and 29th December 2016. Respondents to the 2016 Voter Survey were part of a larger sample (**N** = 45,000) originally interviewed by YouGov for the 2012 CCAP for the 2012 Presidential election. N = 11,168 panellists from the original 2012 sample were invited to respond to the 2016 survey. Of these, N = 8,637 (or 77%) completed the 2016 Voter Survey. YouGov uses a stratified sample design whereby respondents from YouGov's panel are matched to a synthetic sampling frame constructed using Census data from the American Community Survey and the Current Population Survey Voter and Registration Supplement (Democracy Fund, 2017, p. 2). The resulting sample is then weighted by a set of demographic/non demographic variables to make it representative at the national level. Because the objective is to examine White vote choice, all models using the Voter Survey data are estimated using a sub-sample of N = 4,853 White Americans who reported voting for either Clinton or Trump.

In sum, the doctoral thesis analyses vote choice for Trump using three principal sources of national benchmark survey data. This is important because my analyses demonstrate that the results of the vote choice are robust across several sources of data. As will be clear, there are limitations to this approach; one limitation, for instance, is that the

socio-demographic and structural covariates that are used to estimate the baseline vote choice model are not the same across models which use separate sources of data. This is because the wording and measurement of certain items is different across surveys. Having detailed the sources of data for the investigation, the chapter now turns to unpack the modelling strategy. This is crucial because the model will help us assess whether any of the three explanatory contexts are robust frames that help us better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump (Pew Research Center 2018).[15][16]

A Model of Presidential Vote Choice

The primary objective of the doctoral thesis is to test the salience of various predictors on the probability of a White voter having cast their ballot for Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election. However, it is necessary to account for the relative importance of a number of additional factors that might have influenced vote choice in 2016. This is because a host of political, socio-demographic, and structural factors might be acting as a proxy for a

[15] A 2016 exit poll conducted by Edison Research for the National Election Pool – a consortium of ABC News, the Associated Press, CBS News, CNN, Fox, and CNN - suggested that Trump won 58 per cent of the White vote (Huang et al. 2016). However, there are a number of reasons to be sceptical of this figure. First, surveys conducted after an election can be affected by errors stemming from a respondents recall of their vote choice (Atkeson 1999; Wright 1993). Second, election surveys – including the one conducted by the major news organisations for the 2016 election - face challenges from refusals to participate, as well as the fact that a sizeable minority of voters actually voted prior to election day. As such, respondents must be interviewed before election day using conventional survey methodology. Given these limitations, I instead use Pew Research Survey's (2018) validated voter estimates. To generate these estimates, Pew conducted a post-election survey between November 29-December 12, 2016. After conducting the survey, respondents were then matched to publicly available voter registration databases that contain information about voter registration and turnout for nearly every US adult. Consequently, by match respondents to voter files, the validated estimates from Pew avoid problems related to recall error. These validated voter estimates indicate that 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump – a figure that is 4 per cent lower than the estimates of the 2016 exit poll.

[16] It is also important to note that a majority of White voters have supported Republican candidates in the 10 election cycles prior to 2016, suggesting that Trump's election is, in part, the continuation of a general trend of White voters coalescing around the GOP. For example, the average share of the White vote for Republican candidates between 1976 and 2012 was 54.8 per cent (Phillips 2016) –a figure that closely mirrors the 54 per cent figure for Trump in 2016. In fact, Trump only received 1 per cent more of the White vote in 2016 than Mitt Romney did in 2012 (Pew Research Center 2018).

hypothesised predictor of vote choice for Trump. Consequently, the doctoral thesis uses multivariate regression. Importantly, the baseline multivariate regression model will allow us to consider possible explanations for vote choice, notwithstanding the principal explanatory variables of interest in a given findings chapter.

In chapters 4 through 6, therefore, the doctoral thesis employs a "standard model" of vote choice. It is important to note that there is no benchmark model in the study of Presidential vote choice. Nonetheless, there is a degree of concurrence in the existing vote choice literature as to the factors that shape the electoral behaviour of American voters. Models that aim to understand vote choice for White Americans in 2016 are therefore estimated with a basic set of controls for a number of political-behavioural, socio-demographic, and structural factors.

The purpose of specifying the vote choice models with these additional controls is to provide additional robustness to the findings, as well as to account for any factors that may be closely related to a given predictor. Nonetheless, the model specification is made somewhat parsimonious for two reasons. The first is so that the model is not overfitted. This is important because specifying a model with too many parameters may lead to the vote choice model failing to fit the additional data, which has substantive implications for the ability of a model to make accurate predictions about vote choice for Trump (Cawley & Talbot, 2010). The second is so that we are able to determine the effect size of the explanatory variables on vote choice while considering only the most relevant alternative explanations.

Partisanship and Ideology

The first covariate that the baseline model controls for is partisanship. It is critically important to control for partisanship because the bonds that individuals have towards a given political party influences how individuals interact with the political world (Green et al. 2004).

Partisanship is one of the most important variables in the study of voting behaviour. Indeed, perhaps no other variable has been more important to understanding American voting behaviour (Bartels 2000). To put this argument simply, individuals with a strong affiliation to a given political party will generally vote for political candidates who run under that party's banner. For instance, this means that individuals with a partisan affiliation with the Republican Party, by and large, will have voted for Trump in 2016, given that he ran as a Republican. Consequently, all models that follow in chapter 4 through 6 account for the strength of an individual's partisan identification. The variable is measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging between 1 = "strong Democrat," to 7 = "strong Republican."

Notwithstanding the importance of partisanship as a covariate, it is also the case that many Americans sort themselves according to their ideological self-placement (Davis & Dunaway, 2018). That is, Americans adopt liberal, moderate, or conservative ideologies, and likewise describe themselves in these terms. However, the degree to which these ideological placements represent actual viewpoints or core beliefs is rather mixed (Kinder & Kalmoe, 2017). This is despite the fact that many Americans sort themselves according to a given ideology. Despite these concerns, however, and to the extent that many White Americans do possess a meaningful and substantive political ideology, models also control for a respondents' ideology. Ideology is measured a 5-point Likert scale ranging between 1 = "very liberal," to 5 = "very conservative."

Socio-Demographic Covariates

In addition to partisanship and ideology, models are estimated with a number of sociodemographic covariates that are employed as controls. One of these covariates is age. Age is an important covariate to account for in analyses of voter behaviour because of the longstanding link between ageing and increased electoral support for conservative political

actors and political parties. The literature has long given weight to the hypothesis that individuals become more likely to hold conservative viewpoints the older they get (Glenn, 1974; Truett, 1993). Critically, these trends feed into individual voter behaviour, with research demonstrating that ageing increases the likelihood that an individual will vote for a conservative party (Tilley & Evans, 2014). This trend bears out in the validated voter data from 2016 election, with the data indicating that there were substantive differences in voter preferences by age. Specifically, the data indicate that 53 per cent of those aged 65 and over voted for Trump, while only 44 per cent voted for Clinton (Pew Research Center, 2018).

By contrast, younger voters tend to hold more cosmopolitan views than older generations (Sloam & Henn, 2019). As such, they are more likely to support liberal candidates in national elections, just as 58 per cent of those aged between 18-29 did in 2016 by voting for Clinton (Pew Research Center, 2018). However, there are significant generational differences in electoral turnout, with younger Americans tending to vote at much lower rates than older voters (Holbein & Hillygus, 2016). This means that, despite Clinton's large lead over Trump among younger voters, the cohort composed a smaller share of the electorate than those who were older and had a greater proclivity to turn out and vote. To account for these trends in multivariate regression, models are thus estimated by controlling for a respondent's age. Age is a continuous variable measured in years.

Gender is likewise an important covariate to account for when modelling individual voter behaviour. There has been evidence of an increasing gender gap (that is, the difference in party vote share for men and women) in US politics in recent decades. Before 1980, the Democratic Party had a partisan advantage over men and women due to the party's electoral support from conservative Whites in the "Solid South."[17] However, since Reagan's first

[17] The "Solid South" refers to a bloc of Southern states whose interests were aligned with the Democratic Party from the end of Reconstruction to the beginning of the Civil Rights Era in 1964 (Grantham, 1992). During this

victory in the 1980 Presidential election, men have increasingly begun to vote Republican (Kaufmann & Petrocik, 1999). One consequence of this trend is that female Republicans are now a minority in their party. Trump's candidacy is especially important in this context because his pattern of sexist and misogynist rhetoric during the 2016 campaign was noted as being a significant contribution to an unprecedented gender gap in the November election (Setzler and Yanus 2018). The gender gap in 2016 was the largest since the 1972 Presidential election; Among men, the gender gap was 11 points, with 52 per cent of men voting for Trump and 41 per cent voting for Clinton. Among women, by contrast, the gender gap was 13 points and the direction was reversed, with 54 per cent of women voting for Clinton and 39 per cent voting for Trump (Pew Research Center, 2018).

Nonetheless, the most significant observation concerning the gender gap in 2016 was Clinton's inability to win White women (Malone, 2016). Indeed, White women preferred Trump over Clinton by 2 points (Pew Research Center, 2018).[18] This observation is important because it provides a riposte to the notion that the gender gap is driven by egalitarian attitudes. Among White women at least, scholars have concluded that the gender gap is explained by the extent to which voters held sexist and racially resentful attitudes (Setzler & Yanus, 2018). Given these trends in White voter behaviour along the lines of gender, therefore, models are also estimated with controls for gender. Gender is operationalised as a dichotomous variable where 1 = "female," 0 = "male."

In addition to gender, models also account for a respondent's marital status. Distinct from the gender gap, there is also some evidence of a "marriage gap" in American politics. Numerous scholars have observed that single individuals are more likely to vote for Democratic candidates than married voters (Kingston & Finkel, 1987; Weisberg, 1987). One

era, a majority state legislatures and federal offices from the Southern states were held by Democrats. The bloc also voted almost exclusively Democratic in every Presidential election between 1880 and 1964.

[18] 47 per cent of White women voted for Trump versus 45 per cent for Clinton.

explanation for this gap is that married individuals are more likely to own a home and are thus more likely to express concern about protecting their property (Plissner, 1983). Individuals who are married might be more inclined to support Republican candidates who espouse the importance of law and order. Nonetheless, an alternate hypothesis that explains the marriage gap is that the gap is driven by the drift of single women over to the Democratic Party over time. This trend was first observed in the Eighties (Gerson, 1987), and has been confirmed in subsequent analyses which test the determinates of partisan identification with the Democratic Party (Edlund & Pandle, 2002). In light of these trends, models are estimated with a control for a respondent's marital status. The doctoral thesis creates a dichotomous variable for a respondent's marital status from a categorical variable from the 2016 ANES. The variable is coded such that 1 = "married," 0 = "not married."

Educational attainment is also a crucial variable in understanding vote choice for Trump. White voters were highly polarized in 2016 by levels of education; the data indicate that the education gap (that is, the difference in Republican vote share for Whites with and without a college degree) was three times higher than it was in 2016 than at any time since the 1980 Presidential election (Schaffner et al. 2018). This polarization was characterised by Whites with a college degree tending to be more supportive of Clinton in 2016 than they were of Obama in 2012, and Whites without a college degree being far more supporting of Trump in 2016 than they were of Romney in 2012. Given these stark trends in White voter behaviour in 2016, it is therefore important to control for education in regression when estimating models that aim to understand White vote choice. Models are thus estimated with additional controls for a respondent's level of education. Education is measured on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "high school or less," to 6 = "postgraduate."

The next socio-demographic covariate controlled for in multivariate regression is a respondent's level of income. The vote choice literature has long established that there are

significant differences in partisan voting by levels of income. Broadly speaking, the nature of the partisan divide is such that higher incomes are associated with an increased likelihood of voting Republican in US elections. Crucially, these partisan differences in voting by levels of income have largely persisted since the New Deal Era. Indeed, research by Gelman et al. (2010) indicates that the share of voters who voted Republican in every US Presidential election since 1940 have been between 5 and 20 points higher among voters in the upper third of the income distribution relative to voters in the lower third (p. 1204).

Though much scholarly attention has been paid to Trump's ability to electorally mobilise the economic "have nots" in 2016 (Norris & Inglehart, 2019),[19] multiple analyses demonstrate that Trump's rise was facilitated by an appeal to voters whose incomes were relatively high (Silver 2016a; Manza 2017). For example, Silver (2016) notes that the median income of a Trump voter in the 2016 Republican primary was $72,000 – a figure that was well above the national median household income of $51,000 in 2016. In this respect, there is a case to be made that partisan voting differences by levels of income in 2016 were more of a continuation of the trend noted by Gelman et al. (2010), whereby the Republican Party has long enjoyed an electoral advantage among high-income voters. Given that high levels of income were still a relatively robust predictor of support for Trump in 2016, it is important to account for a respondent's level of income when modelling vote choice. Family income is a 16-point ordinal variable where 1 = "less than $10,000," to 16 = "$250,000 or more."

Another socio-demographic covariate controlled for in multivariate regression is a respondent's status as a labour union member. Belonging to a union is associated with an increased likelihood of casting a ballot in US elections (Delaney et al. 1988; Leighley & Nagler, 2007). Beyond the relationship between union membership and political

[19] Norris and Inglehart classify the economic "have nots" as those voters who work in skilled or unskilled manual occupations, those who may be long-term unemployed or whom are in receipt of social benefits, as well as those who perceive themselves as being economically insecure.

participation, there is also evidence of a robust and enduring relationship between union affiliation and support for the Democratic Party. As scholars have noted, unions 'were the agents that bound the working-class to the Democrats' in the US (Hout et al. 1999: 85). Leading Democrats gave unions a significant role in the selection of party candidates in the Mid-Twentieth Century; an action which was rewarded by the electoral loyalty of the working-class to the party for a number of decades. In subsequent decades, however, the significance of union membership on Presidential vote choice has declined due to lower rates of affiliation and the collapse in public trust of unions.

Despite the pervasiveness of working-class narratives in the existing literature on Trump's victory (Gest 2016; Morgan and Lee 2017; Williams 2017), there has been relatively little empirical analysis into whether union membership is associated with voting for Trump. Clinton had a degree of support among worker unions in the 2016 election. Nonetheless, her poor showing in former manufacturing areas of the Industrial Midwest which, crucially, have strong ties to organised labour, is indicative of a relative decline in support for the Democratic Party in heavily unionised areas (Walley 2017). To account for the effect of union membership on vote choice for Trump, the doctoral thesis uses a dichotomous variable from the 2016 ANES which asks respondents whether they are a member of a labour union. The variable is coded such that 1 = "union member," 0 = "not a union member."

The final socio-demographic covariate accounted for in the baseline model is a respondent's status as an Evangelical or a "born again" Christian.[20] It is important to control for religion when modelling Presidential vote choice because a robust body of literature

[20] Evangelical Protestantism is characterised by its emphasis on salvation. An essential tenet of Evangelism is the notion of the conversion or "born again" experience when receiving salvation. The data indicate that Evangelical Protestants are the largest religious group in the US, with 25.4 per cent of the population identifying as Evangelical (Pew Research Center 2014). Evangelicals are also overwhelmingly likely to be White, with the data indicating that 76 per cent of those who identify as Evangelical are White (Pew Research Center 2014).

demonstrates that there is a salient relationship between religious identification and voter behaviour. When modelling the vote choice of White Americans only, it is especially important to account for the effects of Evangelism on vote choice for Republican candidates. This is because White Evangelicals have long been a steadfast source of support for Republican candidates (Lichtman 2008). In addition, their size as a percentage of the overall Republican voter coalition is substantial, with the data indicating that White Evangelicals have made up at least 50 per cent of the Republican voter coalition since 1980 (Langer & Cohen, 2005).

Beyond one's own religious identification, research previously demonstrated that voters perceive Evangelical candidates as more conservative than those who are not (McDermott, 2009). Such evaluations are thus important because they play a role in whom voters decide to support in the polls. As already noted, this is especially the case when it comes to voting in Republican primaries and supporting Republican candidates in general elections. Trump's robust levels of support among White Evangelicals is thus notable given his apparent irreligiosity.

However, the literature that has been published since Trump's victory posits that many White Evangelicals saw Trump as the least-worst option in a general election against Clinton (Gorski, 2019). Evangelical voters were prepared to disregard Trump's lack of religiosity because his somewhat-apocalyptic rhetoric which contended that America would soon cease to be a Christian nation. Such rhetoric appealed to the racialized attitudes of Evangelical voters and connected with their fears regarding of the waning influence of the Evangelical right in US public life (Whitehead et al. 2018). Therefore, to account for the effect of religious identification on White vote choice for Trump, the doctoral thesis uses a dichotomous item that asks whether a White respondent identifies as a "born again"

Christian. The item is coded such that 1 = "born again Christian", 0 = "not a born-again Christian."

Structural Characteristics

Beyond these aforenoted socio-demographic covariates, it is also important to account for the effects of region in the vote choice models. White vote choice for Republican candidates is more likely to be most prevalent in the US South, given the dominance of the GOP at the local, state, and federal level in Southern offices since the end of the Civil Rights Era (Lublin, 2007). While the Democrats' electoral advantage among White Southerners had already begun to diminish during the Civil Rights Era, Nixon's Southern Strategy accelerated the partisan transformation of the US into a bastion of White support for the GOP (Aistrup, 2015).

Indeed, and with the exception of Carter in 1976 and Clinton's first election in 1992,[21] Republican candidates have dominated the US South in the Electoral College since Nixon's landslide win in the 1972 election. Trump's victory in 2016 was, likewise, a continuation of this trend, winning every Southern state with the exception of Virginia. To assess whether White vote choice for Trump is indeed the strongest in the US South, I use data from the 2016 ANES and detail the two-party vote choice of White Americans by region. The results of the cross-tabulation are presented below in **Table 2.1**. Looking at **Table 2.1**, we can see that 68 per cent of Whites who reported living in the South in the 2016 ANES voted for Trump compared to only 32 per cent who voted for Trump. Indeed, this margin of 36 points is greater than that for any other region; reflective of Trump's strong performance in the industrial states of the Great Lakes (McQuarrie 2017), Trump enjoys an advantage of 14

[21] Notably, both Carter and Clinton had been popular Governors from Southern states immediately before they sought the Presidency.

points over Clinton in the Midwest. By contrast, Clinton has an advantage over Trump of 2 points in the West, and 10 in the Northeast. Given these trends in voter behaviour presented below in **Table 2.1**, the doctoral thesis thus accounts for the effect of Southern residence on vote choice for Trump. The item for Southern residency is coded such that a score of 1 indicates that a White respondent lives in the South, and 0 otherwise.

Table 3.1: Two-Party Vote Choice of Whites in 2016, by Region

	Percent Trump	Percent Clinton	N
Northeast	45	55	362
Midwest	57	43	493
South	68	32	626
West	49	51	372

Notes: Table entries are rounded percentages. Sample limited to Whites only. Data are weighted.

Source: 2016 ANES

Despite the inclusion of the item for Southern residency, it is important to note that there are limitations to this specification strategy. A limitation of the survey data is that the ANES item for region does not distinguish between those who have only recently moved to the South and those who have lived there for a longer period of time. This is an important lacuna because Whites who have been raised and socialized in the South are more likely to express racialised attitudes and, critically, identify with the Republican Party (Oliver & Mendleberg, 2000). Thus, it is necessary to qualify that controlling for Southern residence may not be accounting for these more granular patterns of White political behaviour.

Having delineated all of the covariates that are employed in multivariate regression, the baseline model employed in the investigation can be expressed by the following equation:

$Pr\ (Trump) = \beta_0 + \beta_1$ Party ID β_2 Ideology β_3 Age β_4 Gender β_5 Marital Status β_6 Education β_7 Family Income β_8 Union membership β_9 Born Again β_{10} South

Correlational and Multivariate Analysis

To what degree are these socio-demographic and structural characteristics associated with vote choice for Trump? To get a more substantive approximation of the degree of association between the predictors and vote choice, the chapter performed a series of Pearson's pairwise correlation tests. The results of the correlation analysis are presented below in **Table 3.2**. The first column in **Table 3.2** represents the magnitude (or effect size) of the correlation between a given covariate and vote choice for Trump (operationalized as a dichotomous variable where 1 = "voted for Trump," 0 = "voted for Clinton."[22] The second column in **Table 3.2** provides an indication of the significance level of a given association.

As indicated by **Table 3.2**, party ID and ideology exhibit by far the strongest correlations with vote choice for Trump. Reflective of the observation that partisanship and ideology are becoming increasingly difficult concepts to disentangle (Barber & Pope, 2019),[23] the degree of association between partisanship (r = .77) and ideology r = .74) and voting for Trump are remarkably similar. In both cases, the association is likewise significant at the p <.001 level. **Table 3.2** also reveals a number of modest associations between the covariates and vote choice; one's status as a "born again" Christian is associated with having voted for Trump, though the effect size is less half that for either partisanship or ideology at r

[22] To aid interpretability, a score of 1 on the Pearson's scale would indicate a perfect positive correlation. By contrast, a score of -1 would indicate a perfect negative correlation.
[23] The inter-item correlation between partisanship and ideology in the 2016 ANES among the White subsample is r = .74, p <.001.

= .31, p <.001. Southern residence is likewise correlated with vote choice for Trump, but the effect is even smaller than that for religious identification at r = .15, p <.001.

Table 3.2: Correlation Analysis for Vote Choice Model Covariates

Predictor	*r*	p
Party ID	.77	***
Ideology	.74	***
Age	.09	**
Female	-.07	**
Married	.07	**
Education	-.23	***
Income	-.09	**
Union	-.07	**
Born again	.31	***
South	.16	***

Notes: Sample limited to Whites only. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 ANES

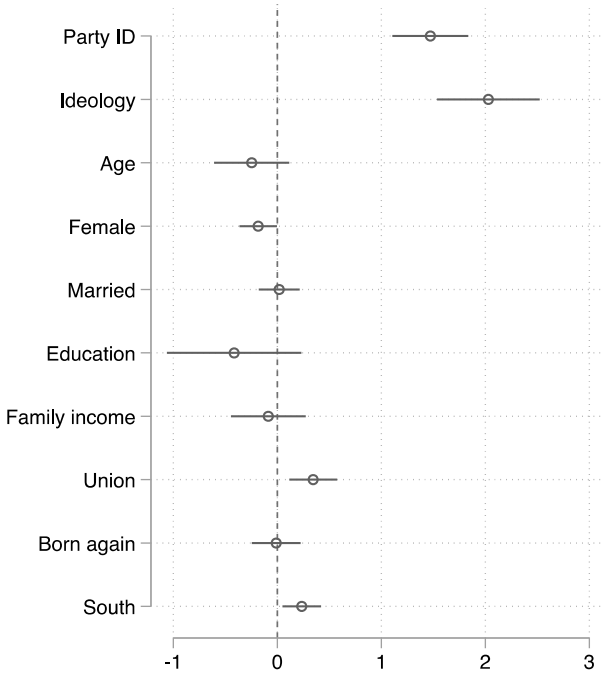
A number of covariates are also negatively associated with vote choice for Trump. Despite validated voter results which demonstrate that White women voted for Trump by a margin of 2 points over Clinton (Pew Research Center, 2018), the dummy variable for gender is negatively associated with vote choice - albeit only marginally at r = -.07, p <.01. Reflective of the longstanding association between organised labour and the Democratic Party, the coefficient for union affiliation is also negatively associated with having voted for Trump. The coefficient for education is also modestly negative (r = -.23, p <.001). It is important to note that, because the item for education is coded such that higher values correspond to higher levels of educational attainment, the size of the Pearson coefficient is

indicative of high educational attainment being negatively associated with vote choice for Trump.

I also estimate a baseline vote choice model using probit regression. The specification of a vote choice model here is useful because it allows us to model vote choice as function of these socio-demographic and structural factors in a simultaneous fashion. **Figure 3.1** is coefficient plot of a model assessing vote choice in which the dependent variable is regressed against party ID, ideology, age, gender, marital status, education, income, union affiliation, one's status as a "born again" Christian, and Southern residency. All variables in the model are also coded to range between 0 and 1 so that effect sizes are somewhat comparable. Coefficients to the right of zero on the x axis in **Figure 3.1** indicate a positive association between a given covariate and voting for Trump. Contrastingly, coefficients to the right of zero are indicative of a negative association between a given predictor and vote choice.

As was the case with the correlation analysis, **Figure 3.1** suggests that party ID and ideology are, by some margin, the covariates that are the most predictive of vote choice. The probit model also finds that there is a significant effect on vote choice through gender and Southern residency, though the sizes of the coefficients are somewhat smaller relative to those of partisanship and ideology. Interestingly, the probit model indicates that there is no significant effect on vote choice for Trump through age, marital status, education, family income, union membership and one's status as an Evangelical Christian. In sum, the baseline vote choice model points to party ID and ideology being strong predictors of vote choice in 2016. However, it is important not to overstate the relative influence of other covariates on vote choice for Trump.

Figure 3.1: Coefficient Plot of Baseline Vote Choice Model



Notes: The points represent the size of the probit coefficient for each covariate on vote choice. The lines are 95 per cent confidence intervals. Sample limited to Whites only. Data are weighted.

Source: 2016 ANES

Additional Factors

The previous section has given us a substantive approximation of the socio-demographic and structural covariates that are significantly associated with vote choice in US Presidential elections, as well as vote choice for Trump in 2016 specifically. While the vote choice model employed in the doctoral thesis can be conceptualized as a "standard" model of Presidential vote choice, it is important to note that there are likely to be a plethora of additional factors that were associated with vote choice of White Americans in 2016. Before the methodology chapter considers these additional factors, it is important to qualify that there are many additional variables that are likely to be associated with voting for Trump, that are nonetheless excluded as parameters when specifying the vote choice model.

For reasons already noted, it is easy to overfit a regression model by estimating with too many parameters; overestimation is problematic because, in doing so, we may extract residual variation (or noise) that represents the underlying structure of models that gauge vote choice for Trump (Burnham & Anderson, 2002).

Another equally important factor to be aware of is the use of multiple sources of data to analyse the salient predictors of vote choice for Trump. While many of the national survey datasets contain the same items for a respondents' socio-demographic information and structural characteristics, additional items of interest to the analysis are not available across all surveys. However, it is critically important that regression models adjust on the same socio-demographic and structural covariates across surveys. This is so that effect sizes are comparable as possible given the use of multiple sources of survey data to examine vote choice for Trump. Thus, one consequence of this estimation strategy is that models may not be robust to the effects of omitted variable bias.[24] Nonetheless, as scholars have noted, it is important that researchers are aware of the effects of potentially omitted variables when estimating regression models. This is so that researchers are able to 'conduct an imperfect investigation, while transparently revealing how susceptible our results are to confounding' (Cinelli & Hazlett, 2020, p. 3).

What then, are the additional factors that might have influenced vote choice for Trump but are nonetheless excluded for the reasons outlined above? The literature that has been published since Trump's victory points to a number of factors that are closely associated with Trump's unique synthesis of radical right populist ideology. One factor that is likely to be significantly associated with support for Trump given his radical right populist bent is authoritarian attitudes. Authoritarian attitudes have long been associated with support for the radical right (Rooduijn, 2014; Dunn, 2015). In the aftermath of the Second World War,

[24] Also known as the problem of unobserved confounding.

Adorno's (2019) notion of the "authoritarian personality" referred to an underlying feeling of anger and fear in response to harsh parenting and economic hardship.

Scholars of the psychology literature refined Adorno's (2019) theory with the development of the right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) scale, which posits that individuals should respect authority, abide by social norms, and be supportive to the idea of punishing those who violate such norms (Altemeyer, 1998). Another, recent development by the psychology literature to buttress the RWA construct is social dominance orientation (SDO). SDO is substantively distinct from RWA in that the former refers to the belief that the state of intergroup relations should be reflective of hierarchies in which some groups are more powerful than others (Pratto et al., 1994).

Indeed, evidence from the political psychology literature demonstrates a degree of association between authoritarian personality traits and support for Trump. Multiple studies find that individuals with salient levels of RWA and SDO were likely to be supportive of Trump in 2016 (Choma & Hanoch, 2017; Pettigrew, 2017; Womick et al. 2019). Generally speaking, Trump resonated with individuals high in RWA because of their fear of out-groups that are perceived as threatening. By contrast, those high in SDO were supportive of Trump because he appealed to their contempt for groups perceived as inferior.

Beyond authoritarian attitudes, another antecedent of support for right-wing populist actors is anti-elitism. Radical-right populist ideology is inherently anti-elitist. A common motif is that radical-right populists defer to the "common wisdom" of the people instead of those in positions of power, who are framed as distant and their interests in opposition to those of "the people" (Betz & Johnson, 2004; Mudde, 2004). While strains of anti-elite discourse are evident in the rhetoric of past Republican Presidents (Shogan 2007), the victories of Bush in 2000 and 2004 were not classified as populist insurrections in the same way that the term has been applied to Trump's victory in 2016. Using original survey data,

Oliver and Rahn (2016) demonstrate that Trump primary voters had a distinct mistrust of experts and disdain towards elites. Moreover, these attitudes were less prevalent among supporters of other primary candidates including Clinton, Sanders, and Cruz.

Despite the evidence above which demonstrates that authoritarian attitudes and anti-elite sentiment are closely related to vote choice for Trump, there is a notable lack of similar items in the national survey datasets used as the sources of data to investigate the research aims of the doctoral thesis. The ANES is perhaps the most comprehensive national benchmark dataset that gauges the political and electoral behaviour of 2016 voters. The dataset, for instance, contains items that gauge authoritarian attitudes (measured on the SDO scale), as well as measures of anti-elitist sentiment. However, these items are not available in the other two benchmark datasets used to examine vote choice in the doctoral thesis (these are the 2016 CCES and the 2016 Voter Study, respectively). Thus, while the existing constraints of the data mean it is not possible to account for these factors across all models, we should nonetheless be aware of the potential impact of these factors on the vote choice of White Americans in 2016.

Model Robustness

Given the exclusion of many of these variables, how can we be sure that the baseline multivariate model specified to examine White vote choice is robust? A reflection on the robustness of the vote choice model is critical because of concerns related to model uncertainty. Model uncertainty is pervasive and inherent in the study of Presidential vote choice. As aforenoted, while there is a relative degree of concurrence in the vote choice literature as to which variables are significantly associated with vote choice in Presidential elections over time, there is no definitive framework outlining what specific control variables should be included in a given model. When the precise specification of the "true" model is

not known, therefore, it is difficult to approximate which imperfect model is best to test the hypotheses guiding the doctoral thesis. Consequently, modest differences in model specifications may produce vastly different results.

Empirical findings are a function of both the data and the model applied to the data (Heckman 2005). The data does not speak for itself, per se, since different methods and models applied to the same dataset will lead to different conclusions. As scholars have observed, choosing which model to report is 'fraught with ethical and methodological dilemmas, and [is] not covered in… classical statistical texts' (Ho et al. 2007: 232). Thus, a growing challenge in the study of Presidential vote is evaluating and demonstrating the robustness of vote choice models.

Given that the research methodology guiding the thesis is underpinned by a positivist approach, model robustness is assessed in a quantitative fashion. One of the ways in which the doctoral thesis evaluates model robustness is with goodness of fit testing. The goodness of fit of a statistical model is a description of how well the model fits the data (D'Agostino 1986). Measures of goodness of fit are typically summary statistics that represent the difference between observed values and the values expected under the model in question. In regression analyses, models are typically assessed on their goodness of fit via the coefficient of determination, or the R-square (R^2) measure. The R^2 measure is the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (vote choice for Trump where 1 = "Trump," 0 = "Clinton").

It is important to note that the R^2 measure for binary outcomes – such as those assessed in the doctoral thesis - is different for the summary statistic for linear outcomes. In linear regression, the R^2 value represents the square of the correlation between the predicted and actual values of the model. This correlation ranges between -1 and 1, meaning that the square of the correlation ranges between 0 and 1. The greater the magnitude of the correlation between the predicted and actual values, the greater the R^2 value. When analysing data in

binary regression, however, the R^2 statistic does not exist. This is because the model estimates from binary regression (for instance, probit and logit) are estimated via maximum likelihood (ML) via an iterative process. To evaluate the goodness of fit of binary models, a number of "pseudo" R^2 measures have been developed by statisticians (Veall & Zimmermann 1996). These measures are referred to as "pseudo" measures because they appear to be similar R^2 measures for linear outcomes in that they are measured on a 0 to 1 scale. However, they cannot be interpreted as substantively similar measures because of the different estimators used to fit linear and binary models. To assess model fit, therefore, the doctoral thesis refers to the pseudo R^2 measure generated via the estimation of the vote choice models.

The doctoral thesis makes no claims as to what pseudo R^2 value accounts for an "acceptable" level of variance explained in the two-party vote choice of White Americans. Nonetheless, it is useful to note that McFadden (1974) considers any value greater than .2 as being indicative of well-fitted model. A pseudo R^2 value <.2 would not necessarily be indicative of a given model being a poor approximation of White vote choice, but - at least based on McFadden's benchmark - it would not be particularly strong, either.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a comprehensive account of the methodological approach underpinning the doctoral thesis. This involved discussion of the onto-epistemological approach informing decisions about the most appropriate methodology for investigating the research aims, the sample and sources of data, the modelling strategy to test the Presidential vote choice of Whites, and considerations of model robustness. Positivism was chosen as the most appropriate onto-epistemological approach because the main objective of the doctoral thesis is to understand which dimension of White estrangement

Trump's election best represents (the left behind thesis, the cultural decline thesis, and the changing America thesis).

Consistent with the positivist research paradigm underpinning the doctoral thesis, a quantitative research methodology was adopted as the principal instrumental approach to understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump. The quantitative research design functions as way of empirically investigating the research objectives of the doctoral thesis. Using cross-sectional, national benchmark survey datasets as the various sources of data, the doctoral thesis uses multivariate regression as a means of gauging why so many Whites voted for Trump in 2016 US Presidential election. The vote choice models control for a number of political-behavioural, socio-demographic, and structural covariates. This is so that we able to discern the relative independence of a given predictor of vote choice relative to a number of variables that are known correlates of voter behaviour.

Having delineated the methodological approach guiding the doctoral thesis, the next chapter will test the robustness of the first significant explanatory context that functions as a frame for better understanding White vote choice for Trump – namely, the "left behind" thesis. The upcoming chapter will do this by testing a set of competing hypotheses underpinning the first explanatory context. The first principal hypothesis (**H1**) posits that Trump's victory was a "revolt" on the part of White voters. Proponents of this hypothesis content that Whites, and particularly those without a university education, were mobilised to vote for Trump because of salient levels of economic dissatisfaction. By contrast, the second and competing hypothesis (**H2**) contends that the salient economic grievances of many White voters are increasingly becoming entangled with a number of complex cultural grievances (Bhambra 2017; Hochschild 2018). Crucially, it is the perceived "failure" of mainstream political parties and politicians to understand these complex grievances that explain White vote choice for Trump.

Beyond chapter 4, this methodological approach will also be used to test the robustness of the other two explanatory contexts in chapters 5 (the cultural decline thesis) and 6 (the changing America thesis). In sum, testing the robustness of these three explanatory contexts will allow us to better understand which particular dimension of White estrangement Trump's victory in the general election best represents; it could be the case that economic grievances explain why so many Whites voted for Trump. Equally, however, it could be the case that a number of in-group identities and White voters' fears about the impact of demographic change were likewise salient factors that were significantly associated with vote choice. The next three chapters will therefore present the findings from the series of multivariate regression models in order to further our understanding of Presidential vote choice in 2016.

Chapter 4: The "Left Behind"

Introduction

The previous chapter provided an outline of the methodological approach underpinning the doctoral thesis. This included key sociodemographic and structural covariates that are hypothesized as being strongly related to Presidential vote choice. Crucially, this methodological approach will allow us to directly test the robustness of the three principal explanatory contexts (left behind thesis, cultural decline thesis, and the changing America thesis) in Chapters 4 through 6. Having delineated the methodological approach and analytical strategy by which the robustness of these explanatory contexts will be empirically tested, the thesis now turns to analyse the first explanatory context for understanding White vote choice for Trump. This first explanatory context is the "left behind" thesis.

There are two competing hypotheses that contribute to our understanding of the "left behind" thesis. The first hypothesis frames Trump's victory as a" revolt" on the part of the economically dissatisfied American White working class. The critical argument underpinning this hypothesis is that Whites – and especially Whites without a college education - were primarily motived by "pocketbook" voting when casting their ballot in the 2016 election. Contrastingly, the second hypothesis presents a more nuanced approach to understanding why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump (Pew Research Center 2018). As Eatwell and Goodwin (2018) have noted, classifying phenomena such as Brexit and Trump as "White working-class backlash[es]" are not supported by a more nuanced analysis of the evidence (p. xviii). Indeed, many additional analyses of the "left behind" literature note that the economic anxieties of White voters are often intersected with a number of nuanced cultural grievances that are not so easily disentangled (Vance 2016; Bhambra 2017; Hochschild 2018). Perhaps

most critically, it is the perceived failures of elites and mainstream politicians to understand these complex grievances that help explain why so many Whites voted for Trump in 2016.

Therefore, the objective of the current chapter is to test the validity of these two hypotheses as frames through which we might better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in the 2016 presidential election (Pew Research Center 2018). Meeting this objective is critical to meeting the wider research objective underpinning the thesis. This is to understand which dimension of White estrangement is best represented by Trump's victory. Importantly, the findings presented in this chapter concerning White Americans' complex economic and cultural grievances will also be comparable to those of the two chapters upcoming because of the standardized coefficients and similar baseline covariates controlled for in regression. In the upcoming discussion chapter, this will allow us to assess the comparative salience of the "left behind" thesis relative to explanations grounded in the salience of dominant in-group identities (cultural decline thesis) and the ways in which diversity and demographic changes affects Whites' political behaviour (changing America thesis). Thus, to meet the specific objective of the current chapter, as well as the overarching objective underpinning the thesis, this chapter poses the following questions:

In what ways does the "left behind" thesis help us to better understand why 54 per cent of White Americans voted for Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election (Pew Research Center, 2018)?

i) Is vote choice for Trump 2016 primarily shaped by the economic grievances of the White working-class?

ii) Or, is Trump's victory on the part of White voters better explained by the confluence of a number of economic and cultural factors that are becoming increasingly difficult to extricate?

First, the chapter analyses whether Trump's victory can be conceptualized as a White working-class "revolt" as has been done in scholarly analysis. In a further exploration of the extent to which Trump's victory is a working-class victory, the chapter also analyses affect for Trump in the Industrial Midwest – a region of the US that has experienced that effects of deindustrialization and resulting job losses in manufacturing over the years. Additionally, the chapter analyses whether Whites opposition to free trade and outsourcing is associated with voting for Trump. This is important because protectionism was a key element of Trump's messaging to his working-class base in the 2016 election. The chapter then estimates a series of models testing whether White voters' short-term economic assessments are associated with voting for Trump. The chapter also examines trends in downward economic mobility to test whether these longer-term trends are likewise associated with vote choice for Trump.

Next, the chapter explores whether Whites' perceptions of the relative speed of the economic recovery from the 2008 recession feeds into feelings towards Obama. As will become clear, analysis of the relationship between evaluations of the economic recovery and affect for Obama is important in the context of the second research question asked in this chapter. This is because we begin to see the ways in which the economic assessments of White voters often intersect with their attitudes towards racial minorities. To further explore these complex economic and cultural relationships, the chapter also analyses whether White voters' economic assessments are moderated by perceptions of the effect of immigration on the US labor market and economy.

In a final test of the second research question, the chapter explores why White Americans are perceived as voting for Trump largely at the behest of their own economic interests (Frank, 2004; Hochschild 2018). Specifically, the chapter analyses whether Whites with poor evaluations of their local communities, but nonetheless express an opposition to

increased state spending and government intervention, voted for Trump in 2016. The chapter then concludes by reflecting on the significance of the findings and lays the groundwork for the second explanatory context (the cultural decline thesis) in the second principal findings chapter.

Trump's Victory as a White Working-Class Revolt

This subsection tests the hypothesis that Trump's victory in 2016 was a "White working-class revolt" (Gest 2016; Morgan and Lee, 2018). To do this, the chapter employs an analytical strategy that works in two ways. First, the chapter assesses whether levels of affect for Trump are different by social class. This is to establish whether Whites who identify as working-class view Trump more favourably than Whites who might belong to another social class. Next, the sub-section turns to analyse patterns of voter turnout and voter migration between the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. This is to gauge (**i**) if the 2016 election cycle was marked by an increased turnout of White working-class voters, and (**ii**) whether these voters migrated to Trump specifically.

First, an important hypothesis to test is whether affect for Trump[25] is different across categories of social class among White Americans. To assess whether this is indeed the case, I conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The ANOVA works by assessing whether there are significant mean differences in levels of affect for Trump by differences in social class identity. By running the ANOVA, we will thus be able to better understand whether Whites with working-class identities exhibit estimates of Trump's that are substantively different from those with other class identities. Affect for Trump is gauged on

[25] That is, favorable or unfavorable estimations.

the standard thermometer scale from the 2016 ANES.[26] To measure social class, the sub-section relies on a 4-point categorical item that asks White respondents which social class they belong to.[27] If working-class Whites have favourable estimations of Trump, de minimis, then we should expect to observe relatively high levels of mean affect for Trump among that group in particular.

The results of the ANOVA indicated that there were significant mean differences in affect for Trump by categories of social class identity among Whites (F [(3, 1612) = 4.82, p <.05). Additionally, Tukey's post-hoc analysis indicated that Whites who identified as lower-class (mean = 50.114, standard deviation = 34.632) or working-class (mean = 45.882, standard deviation = 35.113) exhibited markedly warmer and more favorable estimations of Trump than Whites who identified as middle class (mean = 38.378, standard deviation = 34.938) or upper class (mean = 29.415, standard deviation = 32.316). The results of the ANOVA thus lend weight to the expectation that working-class Whites exhibit relatively favorable estimations of Trump relative to Whites with other social class identities – and especially those with middle- or high-class social identities.

The results of the ANOVA offer a useful insight of how affect for Trump is shaped by social class identity. However, they do not tell us whether Trump was able to mobilize White working-class non-voters in 2016. Addressing this lacuna is a critically important aspect of testing the robustness of the "left behind" thesis. This is because the "left behind" literature consistently notes that Trump's victory was a White working-class "revolt" (McQuarrie 2017) However, the literature does analyse patterns in voter turnout to analyse whether more working-class Whites voted in 2016 relative to 2012, and whether these voters cast their

[26] A score of 0 on the thermometer indicates that a respondent has "very cool or unfavorable feelings" towards Trump. Conversely, a score of 100 indicates that a respondent exhibits "very warm or favourable feelings" towards Trump.
[27] Possible responses are 1 = "lower class," 2 = "working-class," 3 = "middle class," 4 = "upper class."

ballots for Trump specifically. Consequently, the sub-section now turns to analyse patterns of voter turnout and voter migration between 2012 and 2016.

To analyse patterns of voter turnout among working-class Whites between 2012 and 2016, the chapter uses the Current Population Survey (CPS) as its source of data.[28] Estimates of voter turnout among Whites without a college education are reported below in **Table 4.1**. As evidenced by **Table 4.1,** voter turnout among the socio-demographic group increased by 3.2 per cent between 2012 and 2016. While it is important to note that turnout increased relative to the 2012 election, the data also indicate that 42.4 per cent of Whites without a college education did not cast a ballot at all in 2016.

Table 4. 1: Non-College Educated White Voter Turnout, 2012-2016

Year	Turnout
2012	54.4%
2016	57.6%

Notes: Self-reported turnout of voting eligible citizens computed from the Current Population Survey (CPS). estimates for non-college educated Whites are adjusted for vote over-report and non-response bias (McDonald 2020). Source: CPS

Nonetheless, a limitation of the CPS Voter Supplement is that the dataset does not ask which candidate a respondent has voted for. This is problematic because we need to able to quantify the extent to which working-class Whites coalesced around Trump specifically. Therefore, to assess whether Trump was able to successfully mobilize working-class Whites around his candidacy in 2016, the sub-section now turns back to the 2016 ANES. A benefit of the 2016 ANES is that the dataset contains an item that asked White respondents their

[28] A major benefit of the CPS is that the survey generally has low rates of overreport bias relative to other national survey datasets (Hur and Achen, 2013). This is an important factor when calculating turnout rates because respondents have a tendency to overreport their rates of voting in surveys.

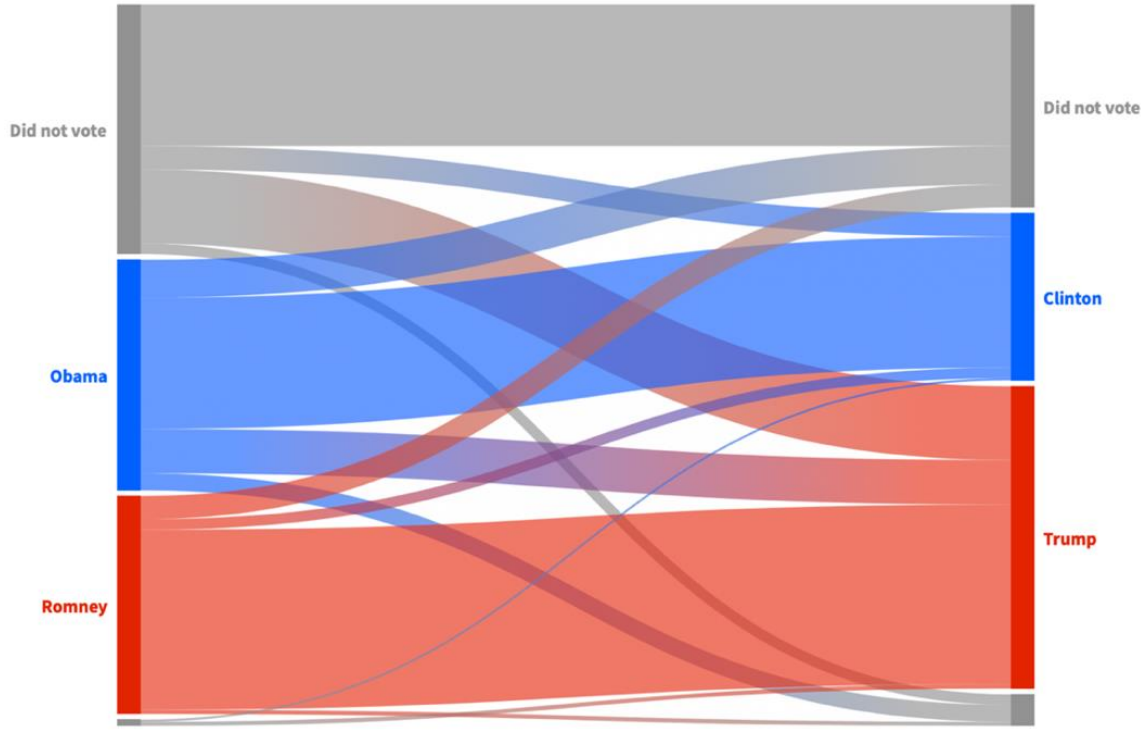
recall of 2012 vote choice in addition to who they voted for in the 2016 election.[29][30] This is useful because it allows us to compare a respondent's vote choice between elections. Moreover, we are also able to track voter migration by social class using the 4-point categorical item for subjective class identification.

Figure 4.1 is a Sankey diagram that compares the vote choice of White working-class respondents in 2012 relative to 2016. The left-hand column denotes a respondent's vote choice in the 2012 election, and the right-hand column denotes vote choice in 2016. The width of the arrows in **Figure 4.1** is proportional to the rate of change for each of the possible categories in the items for 2012 and 2016 vote choice. For interpretability, two party vote choice is coded to the respective colours of the two major parties (that is, blue for Democrats and Red for Republicans), while non-voters and third-party voters are coloured grey.

Figure 4.1 indicates that 34 per cent of Whites who self-identify as working-class in the 2016 ANES did not vote at all in the 2012 election. Of those who did vote, 50 per cent of working-class Whites voted for Obama, 48 per cent voted for Romney, and 2 per cent voted for the third-party candidate. Moving from 2012 to 2016, we see only 30 per cent of working-class Whites reported non-voting in 2016 (an increase in turnout of 4 per cent relative to 2012). Of those who did vote in 2016, a remarkable 67 per cent of working-class Whites voted for Trump,[31] 30 per cent voted for Clinton, and 3 per cent voted for a third-party candidate.

[29] Possible categories for the items for 2012 and 2016 vote choice were 1 = "the Democratic candidate," 2 = "The Republican candidate," 3 = "other," and 4 = "did not vote."
[30] Still, it is important to be aware that voters can fail to accurately recall their vote choice (Wright 1993).
[31] This figure closely matches the figure 64 per cent of non-college educated Whites who reported voting for Trump from a large N sample of validated 2016 voters (Pew Research Center 2018).

Figure 4.1 White Working-Class Voter Migration Between 2012 and 2016



Notes: Patterns of voter migration limited to Whites who self-identify as working-class. Left hand column denotes recall of 2012 presidential election vote choice. Right hand column denotes vote choice in the 2016 presidential election.

Source: 2016 ANES

In contextualizing these trends in White working-class voter migration between 2012 and 2016, it is important to note two things. First, the data indicate that Trump was able to expand the Republican base of White working-class voters in 2016 by (**i**) activating 28 per cent of 2012 non-voters, and (**ii**) by converting 18 per cent of working-class Whites who had previously voted for Obama in 2012. Second, Clinton in 2016 was not able to hold together the coalition of working-class Whites that had voted for Obama in 2012. Tellingly, of the working-class Whites who voted for Obama in 2012, only 62 per cent voted for Clinton in 2016; instead of voting for Clinton in 2016, 15 per cent of Obama's 2012 base did not vote at

all, 18 per cent voted for Trump, and the remaining 5 per cent voted for a third-party candidate.

The data presented thus far provide some evidence in favor of the hypothesis that Trump's victory in 2016 can be conceptualized as a White working-class revolt. First, we know from analysis of the CPS data that turnout among working-class Whites increased between 2012 and 2016. Second, it is also apparent from the analysis of the ANES data concerning the migration of working-class White voters between elections, that Trump was able to activate non-voters and convert a significant amount of 2012 Obama voters. In further testing the hypothesis of whether Trump's victory can be conceptualized as "revolt" on the part of White working-class voters, it is useful to look at the places that performed well relative to Mitt Romney in the 2012 election. Critically, an area of the US that Trump performed better than Romney did in 2012 was the industrial Midwest (colloquially known as the US "Rust Belt"). As will be clear, Trump's performance in the Industrial Midwest relative to Romney in 2012 makes sense given that such are both Whiter and less educated than the rest of the nation. Consequently, the next sub-section turns to examine working-working-class support for Trump in the industrial Midwest.

Support for Trump in the Industrial Midwest

This sub-section assesses the extent of White working-class support for Trump in the Industrial Midwest. The sub-section begins by noting how the Industrial Midwest has long been a baston of White working-class electoral support for the Democratic Party. Next, the sub-section traces patterns of White working-class voter alignment from FDR to Trump, noting how rates of support for the Democratic Party among working-class Whites in the industrial Midwest have begun to decline in recent decades. Lastly, the sub-section explores the salient factors that might have caused working-class White voters in Rust Belt

communities to vote for Trump in 2016. Specifically, I test the relationship between declining manufacturing employment and the relative strength of Trump's performance in 2016 relative to that of Mitt Romney in 2012 in Rust Belt counties. This is because macroeconomic trends related to deindustrialization are hypothesized as being related to increased support for populist actors in advanced Western democracies (Mughan et al 2003).

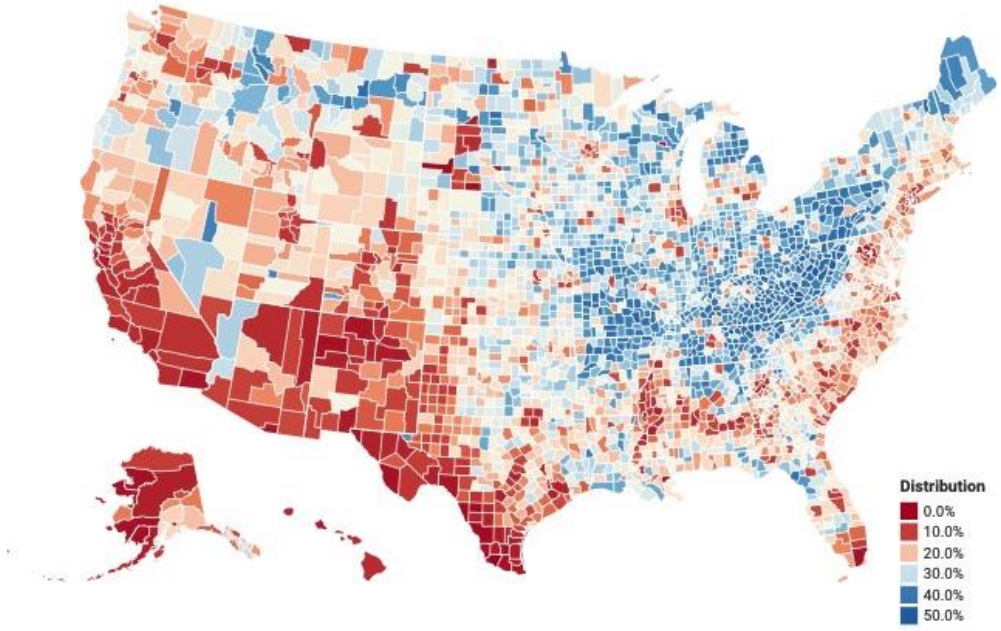
Once the centre of America's industrial might, the closure of steel mills in cities like Youngstown, Ohio during the Seventies heralded deindustrialisation and significant job losses in Midwest communities whose economies were once centered around heavy industry (Fuechtmann 2009). Along with factory closures and declines in manufacturing employment came a new name for the Industrial Midwest - the US "Rust Belt." Given the prevalence of heavy industry in Rust Belt communities, it is perhaps unsurprising that the region has strong ties to organised labour and the Democratic Party (Buffa 1984). Critically, even union membership declined during the latter half of the Twentieth Century (Goldfield 1989), the Industrial Midwest remained a Democratic electoral stronghold.

While unions have come to represent increasingly diverse workforces in recent decades, it is important to note that there is a long association between union membership and the White-working-class. This is an important observation if we consider the link between the demographics of the industrial Midwest and the region's historical support for the Democratic Party; As **Figure 4.2** indicates, there are large concentrations of working-class Whites throughout the states of the Industrial Midwest.

Indeed, the link between the White working-class and electoral support for the Democratic Party goes back decades. In 1932, the socio-demographic group formed part of FDR's New Deal Coalition. This alignment lasted until the 1960s with the shattering of the New Deal Coalition along racial lines during the Civil Rights Era. Afterward, working-class Whites increasingly began to vote for Republican candidates in national elections, backing

Nixon and Reagan in 1972 and 1984. While, this exodus was partly halted when President Bill Clinton brought them back into the fold in 1992, the data indicate that support for the Democratic Party among the White working-class has continued to decline in subsequent decades (Carnes and Lupu 2020).

Figure 4.2: The County-Level Distribution of Working-Class Whites



Notes: Blue areas of the choropleth map are indicative of a higher concentration of working-class Whites in a given county. Shading represents the number of non-Hispanic white Americans aged 25 or over without a college education as a percentage of the total county population.

Source: US Census Bureau/IPUMS NHGIS University of Minnesota (2020)

By 2016, political scientists began to question whether the Rust Belt would continue to be a source of robust electoral support for the Democrat in the 2016 election (Silver 2015). Since the 2016 election, scholars have noted that Trump had particular appeal to disaffected White working-class voters in the Rust Belt because of his messaging on the decline on American manufacturing (McQuarrie 2017). The literature reveals an important relationship between industrial decline and increased support for populist actors who make the link

between voters' economic insecurity and their resentment towards elites for their perceived failure to address their economic plights (Mughan et al. 2003). This is a critical observation, given that we observe similar across of a host advanced Western democracies. For example, Goodwin and Heath (2016) have shown that areas that voted strongly to leave in the 2016 "Brexit" referendum have been disproportionately affected by deindustrialization relative to other areas of the UK. Given these developments, then, it might be the case that Rust Belt voters who are especially affected by declines in manufacturing employment voted for Trump because of his emphasis on bringing back manufacturing and preventing further offshoring of jobs.

However, I am not aware of any studies that directly test the relationship between declines in manufacturing employment and increased support for Trump in Rust Belt communities. The sub-section now turns to address this important lacuna by estimating a regression model. Specifically, I assess whether long-term declines in manufacturing employment are significantly associated with increased support for Trump in the Rust Belt. To test this expectation, I use OLS regression. [32] The dependent measure, the level of Trump's overperformance in 2016, is calculated by estimating the difference in vote share for the Republican Presidential candidate between 2012 and 2016 (Dave Leip's Election Atlas, 2020). The explanatory measure, declining manufacturing employment, is calculated by estimating the difference in percentage of workers employed in the manufacturing sector at the county level between 2012 and 2016 (ACS/IPUMS NHGIS, 2020).

[32] Models are estimated with a number of additional controls for county level vote choice. These are percentage of the county population that is non-Hispanic White (ACS/IPUMS NHGIS, 2020); median county age (ACS/NHGIS, 2020); the percentage of the county population that is female (ACS/IPUMS NHGIS, 2020); the percentage of the county population without a college degree (ACS/IPUMS NHGIS, 2020), the percentage of housing units in a county that are owner occupied (ACS/IPIMS NHGIS, 2020); the employment rate as a percentage of the total county labour force (BLS, 2020), median household income in adjusted in 2016 dollars (ACS/IPUMS NHGIS, 2020; the percentage of the county population under 65 without health insurance, and county population density (measured as the number of inhabitants per square mile in a given county) (US Census Bureau, 2020).

Table 4.2 reveals the relationship between declining manufacturing employment and change in Republican vote share between 2012 and 2016 in Rust Belt counties. If declining manufacturing employment is significantly related to vote choice, we should expect to observe a positive coefficient the explanatory variable. **Table 4.2** indeed indicates that declines in manufacturing employment between 2000 and 2016 are positively related to the rate of overperformance in the Republican vote share between elections, β = .080. However, the effect is not significant at the accepted p <.05 benchmark.

Overall, the results of the OLS model point to declines in manufacturing employment not being a significant predictor of increased vote share for Trump in 2016 relative to 2012 when we account for a host of standard county-level sociodemographic and structural controls. However, this does not necessarily mean that declining manufacturing employment is not related to increased vote share for Trump at all. Rather, it could be the case that declining manufacturing employment is simply acting as a proxy for another variable that is accounted for in the OLS model. To test this hypothesis further, I also performed a simple linear regression without the socio-demographic and structural covariates. When we specify this linear model, declining manufacturing employment becomes a significant predictor of increased Republican vote share between 2012 and 2016 at β .337, p <.001. Consequently, while there is a case to be made that declining manufacturing employment in the Rust Belt is associated with increased support for Trump relative to Mitt Romney in 2012, it is important to qualify that such declines are acting as a proxy for other variables that are more significantly related to Trump's rate of over-performance in Rust Belt counties.[33]

[33] A series of Pearson pairwise tests indicated that declines in manufacturing employment were strongly and negatively associated with the percentage of the civilian labour force in full time employment in a given county r = -.52. A more substantive way of understanding this correlation is to look at the inverse – i.e., that declining manufacturing employment is positively associated with non-participation in the labour force.

Table 4.2: OLS Models of The Effect of Decline in Manufacturing Employment on the Vote Share for Trump in the Rust Belt

	(1)
Manufacturing employment decline	.080 (.049)
Percent non-Hispanic White	.076* (.032)
Median age	.001* (.001)
Percent female	-.306 (.142)
Percent without a college degree	.314*** (.029)
Owner occupied housing unit rate	.054** (.021)
Labor force participation rate	-.120*** (.034)
Adjusted 2016 Household income	-.051** (.026)
Percent under 65 without health insurance (White only)	.113 (.071)
Population per square mile	-.060** (.023)
Constant	.055*** (.011)
R^2	.692
N	402

Notes: Dependent variable is change in the Republican vote share between 2012 and 2016. Table entries are standardized coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Sample limited to counties in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Source: 2016 ANES

While this sub-section has found that declines in manufacturing employment are not significantly related with voting for Trump in Rust Belt counties with large numbers of working-class Whites, another factor to consider are the views of White workers on trade and outsourcing in such communities. This is important because populist actors such as Ross Perot found strong electoral support among Whites without a college education in the 1992 Presidential election by emphasising the importance of protectionist policies in past elections.

Consequently, the next-sub-section provides an individual-level analysis on protectionist views and White-working class support for Trump.

White Working-Class Voters, Protectionism, and Support for Trump

The previous subsection demonstrated that the macroeconomic effects of globalization[34] on areas of "heavy industry" are positively (though, not significantly) associated with the 2016 Republican vote share in Rust Belt counties. While these spatial effects are important, it could also be the case that these effects feed into individual views towards trade and the outsourcing of jobs in such areas. Consequently, the chapter now turns to test the relationship between the protectionist views of working-class voters and vote choice for Trump in the Rust Belt.

Similar to the ways in which Ross Perot railed against the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the outsourcing of jobs to Mexico and emerging Asian markets in the 1992 Presidential election,[35] the focal point of Trump's economic message to disaffected working-class voters was one of protectionism. For instance, Trump consistently argued that the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TTP) was a "terrible" deal and threatened to impose imports tariffs on companies thinking about offshoring their US-based operations (Calmes 2015; Epstein and Nelson 2016). It is important to draw attention to these trends because there is also reason to expect that political candidates who emphasize the importance of certain policy positions should garner greater support among voters who share similar positions themselves (Reher 2014). Indeed, and consistent with this observation, research indicates that voters with protectionist views on trade were drawn to Perot's candidacy in 1992 (McCann et al. 1999).

[34] Specifically, plant closures and the declining manufacturing employment share in Rust Belt counties.
[35] In a 1992 Presidential debate, Perot famously asserted that NAFTA would lead to a "giant sucking sound" headed south of the US border (The New York Times Archives, 1992). Here, Perot was referring to the hypothesized decline in manufacturing jobs to markets where the cost of labor was substantively lower than that for making products in the US.

While some attention has been paid to the effect of Trump's trade positions on White vote choice (Sides et al. 2018), I am not aware of any significant studies that analyse whether these effects were especially salient among White voters without a college education. Neither am I aware of any studies that analyse the interaction between the protectionist views of working-class White voters and Rust Belt residency. However, this is a critically important omission; there is reason to suspect that protectionist views on trade and outsourcing are more salient among workers in blue-collar occupations, since such jobs are more exposed to the effects of cheap imports and offshoring than white-collar occupations (Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Owen and Johnson 2017). Consistent with these observations, it is thus reasonable to expect that vote choice for Trump among working-class Whites is likely to be associated with their positions on trade and the outsourcing of jobs. Moreover, given the positive association between declining manufacturing employment and the 2016 Republican vote share in Rust Belt counties, there is further reason to expect that these issues will have been especially salient to White working-class Rust Belt residents.

To explore this hypothesis, I turn again to the 2016 ANES. Specifically, I test the expectation that the working-class Whites with protectionist views have a high probability of voting for Trump. Further, we should also expect to observe a substantive interaction between protectionist views and Rust Belt residency on voting for Trump. I operationalize two items from the 2016 ANES as my measures of protectionist views. The first is an item that asks whether government should encourage or discourage the outsourcing of jobs. And the second is a 7-point ordinal item that asks to what extent a White respondent favours or opposes free trade agreements.

In my analysis, I control for my baseline socio-demographic covariates that are hypothesized as being robust predictors of Presidential vote choice. I also construct a dummy variable for Rust Belt residency (1 = "Rust Belt," 0 = 'non-Rust Belt") out of a variable from

the 2016 ANES that asks White respondents in which state they reside.[36] Because protectionist views are also likely to be associated with one's occupation, I include an additional dummy variable accounting for whether a respondent is in full time employment (1 = "employed full time," 0 = "not employed full time.' Lastly, to get a better picture of the vote choice of working-class Whites, I limit my sample to Whites without a college education.

What, then, is the nature of the association between protectionist views and Rust Belt residency - as well as their substantive interaction - on vote choice for Trump? **Table 4.3** presents a series of vote choice models that depict the main effects of White working-class voters' views on outsourcing and free trade, as well as Rust Belt residency, on vote choice. **Table 4.3** also depicts the coefficient for the interaction term between working-class White voter's protectionist views and Rust Belt residency.

The results of the probit models indicate that preferences for discouraging the outsourcing of jobs and opposition to free trade agreements are significantly associated with voting for Trump. The main effect for Rust Belt residency is also positive and significant in the model for working-class White voters' views on outsourcing. However, the main effect for Rust Belt residency falls short of the $p < .05$ level of significance in the model for voters' opposition to free trade deals. Importantly, both of the vote choice models indicate a positive and significant interaction effect between Rust Belt residency and protectionist views on voting for Trump.

[36] As was the case in the previous section, these are the states of the Industrial Midwest won at least once by Obama (Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Table 4.3: Probit Models of the Effect of Working-Class White Voters' Protectionist Views

	(1)	(2)
Rust Belt	.138*	.034
	(.069)	(.062)
Discourage outsourcing	.117*	.
	(.069)	
Rust Belt*discourage outsourcing	.047*	.
	(.046)	
Oppose free trade deals	.	.167***
		(.059)
Rust Belt*oppose free trade deals	.	.034*
		(.062)
Employed	.139	.153*
	(.072)	(.073)
Party ID	.700***	.693***
	(.0930	(.092)
Ideology	.483***	.473***
	(.105)	(.107)
Age	.327***	.332***
	(.065)	(.068)
Female	.100	.114
	(.066)	(.067)
Married	.063	.052
	(.065)	(.066)
Income	.082	.091
	(.075)	(.076)
Union	-.057	-.050
	(.060)	(.060)
Constant	-.057	-.355***
	(.060)	(.071)
Pseudo R^2	.412	.408
N	776	766

Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump where 1 = "Trump," 0 = "Clinton." Data are weighted. Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites without a college education who voted for Trump or Clinton. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 ANES

Overall, the results of the vote choice models are important because they demonstrate that protectionist views among working-class Whites are significantly associated with voting for Trump. In addition, we find that these effects are intensified when we specify an interaction term for Rust Belt residency. While previous studies had established a degree of association between protectionist views and voting for Trump (Mutz 2018), an important

limitation of these studies is that they do not account for how such views might be shaped by educational differences between Whites. Thus, by focussing on a subset of working-class Whites only, the analysis here offers a useful contribution to the existing literature on the relationship between protectionist views and support for Trump.

However, in contextualising these results in light of the broader hypothesis that Trump's victory can be explained by the economic grievances of the White working-class, it is important to note that these effects are likely to be limited to those places that are disproportionately affected by deindustrialization.[37] In this respect, it is also necessary to look at how White voters' economic assessments across the nation as a whole fed into vote choice in 2016. Therefore, the chapter now turns to test whether voters' economic assessments concerning the state of the national economy and their personal financial situation were significant predictors of vote choice beyond the US Rust Belt.

"It's the Economy, Stupid": Pocketbook Voting and Support for Trump

The salient economic factors behind Trump's victory in 2016 fit broadly within the rational choice model of "pocketbook" voting (Lewis Beck 1985). Pocketbook voting posits that voters will usually elect parties that have benefitted them financially and punish those that have made them worse off. Information about voter assessments of the national economy (sociotropic evaluations) and one's personal financial wellbeing (egotropic evaluations) have long been assumed to be important variables in the study of vote choice (MacKuen et al. 1992; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). Political actors have likewise recognised the importance of voters' economic assessments over and above other concerns come election time. Most notably in the 1992 election, Democratic strategists devised the

[37] Such as the US Rust Belt.

phrase “its’s the economy, stupid” to keep Bill Clinton on message in highlighting the poor economic record of then President George H.W. Bush (Carville 1992).

Proponents of the “pocketbook” voting model frame Trump’s victory through the assertation that voters perceived a slow economic recovery under Obama and sought to punish the Democratic Party by deciding not to elect Hillary Clinton, whose victory was framed as a “3rd term” for Obama. In testing the robustness of this model, scholars have found limited evidence for the idea of “pocketbook” voting being a salient explanation for understanding why Trump won in 2016 (Mutz 2018). These studies are also largely constituent with extant literature on the weak relationships between economic insecurity and voting for populist actors (Margalit 2019). However, it is important to note that such studies have not probed whether we might observe any heterogenous effects in White voters’ economic assessments by education. This is a critical omission, given that perceptions of national economic conditions vary according to a host of socio-demographic indicators, including educational attainment (Duch et al. 2000). Given the nature of White voter polarization by educational attainment in 2016, it could therefore be the case that negative sociotropic and egotropic assessments were more salient among Whites without a college education, and that these assessments were associated with an increased probability of voting for Trump.

To assess whether negative sociotropic and egotropic assessments were more salient among White working-class voters than they were for higher-educated voters, I again turn to the 2016 ANES. The 2016 ANES dataset contains two items that are standard measures of voters’ sociotropic and egotropic assessments. The item for sociotropic assessments is five-point ordinal item that asks whether they thought the national economy had gotten better or worse in the past year. The item for egotropic assessments, by contrast, is a five-point ordinal item that asks how worried they are about their personal financial situation. To gauge

whether higher rates of economic dissatisfaction are associated with voting for Trump, the items are coded such that higher values correspond to negative assessments of the national economy and one's personal finances.

Next, to see if sociotropic and egotropic economic assessments differ by White voters' levels of educational attainment, I estimate two separate probit models for White voters without a college education and for those with a college degree. If individual assessments of the national economy and one's personal financial situation were more salient among White working-class voters, de minimis, then we should expect to observe a larger coefficient size for both economic variables in the non-college educated sample. The results of the two probit models for vote choice are presented below in **Table 4.2**.

The first column of **Table 4.2** presents the results for the non-college educated subsample of White voters. Looking at this column, we see that White working-class voters' concerns about the national state of the economy are not significantly related to vote choice for Trump. Next, the coefficient for White working-class voters' concerns about their personal financial situation is substantially less than that for assessments of national economic trends. Nonetheless, we see that such concerns are significantly related to voting for Trump at $p < .05$. Therefore, the results of the first model point to working-class White voters being more concerned about their personal finances than the national outlook when casting their ballot in 2016, and that such assessments were associated with an increased probability of voting for Trump.

Next, the second column in **Table 4.2** presents the results for the college-educated subsample of White 2016 voters. In this column, we see that college educated voters' assessments of their personal financial situation are not significantly related to vote choice, but their assessments of the state of the national economy are. Indeed, the coefficient for college educated White's assessments of the state of the national economy is over 6 times

larger than that for their personal financial situation (β = .350). This order of magnitude is equal to that of ideology and is surpassed only by strong partisan affiliation to the Republican Party. In contrast to the results of the model for non-college educated Whites, therefore, the findings from the second model indicate that White voters with a college education were far more concerned about the national economy than their personal finances, and that these concerns were strongly associated with a higher probability of voting for Trump.

Table 4.4: Probit Models of the Effect of White Voters' Economic Assessments, by Education

	No college degree	**College degree**
National economic trends	.130 (.072)	.350*** (.058)
Personal financial situation	.074* (.068)	.054 (.057)
Party ID	.671*** (.096)	.727*** (.077)
Ideology	.470*** (.106)	.350*** (.086)
Age	.134*** (.061)	.145** (.053)
Female	.062 (.064)	-.067 (.052)
Married	.065 (.066)	.081 (.055)
Income	.092 (.075)	-.028 (.064)
Union	-.047 (.062)	.134** (.051)
Born again	.067 (.061)	.062 (.054)
South	-.006 (.064)	-.010 (.052)
Constant	-.355*** (.068)	-.472*** (.058)
Pseudo R^2	.404	.423
N	776	1,288

Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump where 1 = "Trump," 0 = "Clinton." Data are weighted. Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites who voted for Trump or Clinton. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 ANES

Overall, the results of the models for the effect of voters' economic assessments on vote choice point to some noteworthy differences by education. We already know that White voters were highly polarized by education when it came to vote for Trump in 2016 as it related to their racial attitudes and attitudes towards women (Schaffner et al. 2018). However, the results presented here demonstrate that college/non-college educated voters were also polarized by their economic assessments. College educated White voters seemed minimally concerned with their own finances and expressed greater concern about macroeconomic trends. Contrastingly, Whites without a college education were less concerned with macroeconomic trends and much more concerned about their personal finances. The results are important because they demonstrate that Trump was able to speak to the economic concerns of both sets of White voters.

Having explored the extent to which the short-term economic assessments of White voters were significantly related to voting for Trump in the 2016 election, the chapter now turns to examine whether longer-term trends related to downward economic mobility are also associated with vote choice.

Economic Mobility and the Collapse of the American Dream

This sub-section explores the extent to which trends related to downward economic mobility fed into the vote choice of White Americans when casting their ballot for President in 2016. The sub-section first unpacks the link between the idea of the "American dream" and economic mobility, noting how generations of Americans have long expressed robust belief in the view that they will be better off than their parents in survey data. However, trends in the post-Great Recession attitudinal data reveal that an increasing number of Americans express little confidence that they will be better off than their parent's generation.

Given these developments, I specify a series of vote choice models to test whether White voters' perceptions of opportunity in America and their assessments of mobility relative to previous decades were associated with voting for Trump.

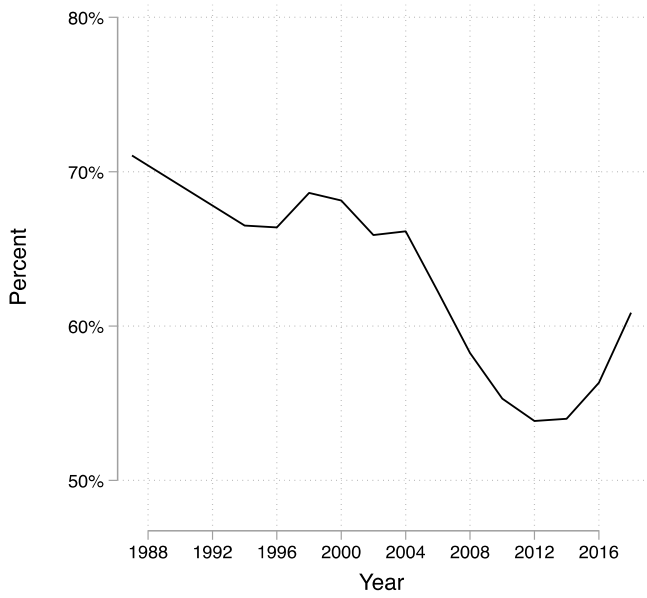
The belief that economic mobility is possible is the essential underpinning of a temporal abstraction known as the "American dream" (Isaacs et al. 2008; Urahn et al. 2012). The American dream was coined by Adams (1931). Here, the author defined the American dream as that idea 'of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone' (Adams 2017: 308). At a more specific level, however, this belief is underpinned by the hope that children will be better off than their parents (Cullen 2003; Samuel 2012). The literature on economic mobility has used this hope as a baseline in surveys as a way of gauging attitudes on intergenerational differences in economic prosperity. When younger generations are asked to assess their economic situation, often they compare their own standard of living to that of their parents at the same age (Goldthorpe 1987). Historically, the literature has focused on the economic prosperity of the Baby Boomer generation born between 1946 and 1964.[38] Cohort comparisons have shown that Boomers accumulated greater levels of wealth relative to the Silent Generation born between 1928 and 1945 at the same points during their life courses (Keister and Deeb-Sossa 2004). The Boomer generation have been an important cohort to study because they were the last generation for which rates of mobility increased relative to their parents' generation (Chetty et al. 2016).

As rates of mobility have slowed (and in some cases declined) for contemporary generations, scholars have debated about the extent to which mobility is now possible (Isaacs et al., 2008; Putnam 2012). The newfound importance of such debates in academic circles has likewise been reflected in the addition of items to national benchmark surveys that gauge

[38] There is disagreement among scholars as to where precisely each generation ends and another begins. For the purpose of the chapter, I defer to the generational classifications of the Pew Research Center (2019).

Americans attitudes towards intergenerational mobility. For instance, from 1988 onwards, the General Social Survey (GSS) assessed Americans' attitudes towards intergenerational mobility by asking Americans whether they agreed with the statement: "The way things are in America, people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living". **Figure 4.3** uses data from the GSS to plot these trends for White Americans over time.

Figure 4.3: Whites' Efficacy in Economic Intergenerational Mobility, 1987-2016



Notes: Graph created using attitudinal data on economic wellbeing from the General Social Survey (GSS). Sample limited to White Americans aged 18 or over. Y-axis value represents the percentage of White Americans responding to the question: The way things are in America, people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living. Do you agree or disagree?

Source: GSS, 1972-2018

Figure 4.3 indicates that the percentage of Whites who believed that their families stood a good chance of improving their standard of living remained relatively stable between 1988 and the year 2004, never varying more than higher than 71 per cent or lower than 67 per

cent between this time. After 2000, however, this belief began to decline markedly. Between 2004 and 2010, the percentage of Whites who believed that their families stood a good chance of improving their standard of living decreased from 67 percent to 49 percent. This latter figure represented the lowest percentage of White Americans in agreement since the inception of the intergenerational mobility items since 1988. This figure began to uptick between 2012 and 2016, increasing from 46 to 61 per cent. Nonetheless, this figure of 61 per cent in 2016 still represented the lowest percentage of Whites who expressed agreement to the statement in over 12 years.

Given these trends in the attitudinal data, to what extent were such sentiments on the mind of White voters when casting their ballot in 2016? To test whether White voters' views towards economic mobility were associated with a significant probability of voting for Trump in the 2016 US presidential election, I turn once more to the 2016 ANES as my source of data. The 2016 ANES contains two items that I operationalize into measures of voter attitudes towards economic mobility in the US. The first is a five-point ordinal item that asks respondents how much opportunity there is in America to get ahead. Contrastingly, the second is a 7-point ordinal item that asks respondents how difficult economic mobility is in the US compared to 20 years ago. I code the items such that higher values correspond to negative perceptions.

It is also useful to assess whether there are significant differences in White mobility attitudes by education on vote choice, given the polarization between White voters' short-term economic assessments in the previous sub-section. Thus, I specify two separate vote choice model using a probit estimator for White voters with and without a college degree. If White voters' attitudes towards economic mobility are associated with vote choice in either of the models, then we should expect to observe a positive and significant ($p < .05$) coefficient

for either of the mobility items. The results of the two probit models for vote choice are presented below in **Table 4.5**.

Table 4.5: Probit Models of the Effect of White Voters' Views Towards Economic Mobility, by Education

	No college	**College degree**
Opportunity to get ahead	.019 (.067)	.037 (.058)
Economic mobility compared to 20 years ago	-.005 (.067)	.130* (.055)
Party ID	.718*** (.097)	.765*** (.073)
Ideology	.446*** (.105)	.416*** (.082)
Age	.302*** (.065)	.132* (.054)
Female	.062 (.063)	-.047 (.051)
Married	.068 (.066)	.061 (.055)
Income	.086 (.076)	-.063 (.063)
Union	-.061 (.062)	.127* (.052)
Born again	.074 (.062)	.060 (.054)
South	-.012 (.135)	-.027** (.110)
Constant	.014 (.140)	-.340*** (.098)
Pseudo R^2	.406	.403
N	773	1,285

Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump where 1 = "Trump," 0 = "Clinton." Data are weighted. Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites who voted for Trump or Clinton. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source 2016 ANES

The first column in **Table 4.5** represents the results for the sample of White voters without a college education. **Table 4.5** indicates that neither concerns about the opportunity to get ahead in America, nor voters' assessments of the relative ease of economic mobility

relative to the previous 20 years, are significantly related to voting for Trump. The coefficient for the economic opportunity item is weakly positive at β = .019, but does begin to approach conventional levels of statistical significance. Contrastingly, the coefficient for voter perceptions of the relative ease of economic mobility in America today relative to 20 years ago is negative at β = -.005. This finding would seem to indicate, therefore, that non-college educated White voters who thought that economic mobility in 2016 was worse compared to 20 years were less likely to vote for Trump. In sum, the results of the first model indicate that White working-class voters' concerns about economic mobility were not significant factors in casting their vote for President.

Given this pattern of null results for the sub-sample of non-college educated White voters, do we observe any significant effects on vote choice among White voters with a college degree? The second column in **Table 4.5** presents the results for the sub-sample of college-educated Whites. The coefficient for voter perceptions about how much opportunity there is in America to get ahead is twice the size of the coefficient in the first model, and approaches accepted levels of significance at p =.062. Notably, the coefficient for voter perceptions of economic mobility in 2016 relative to 20 years ago is strongly positive and significant at β = .130, p <.05. In other words, White voters with a college degree who perceived that economic mobility was worse compared to 20 years ago had a high probability of voting for Trump. Overall, then, the results of the second model point to White voters with a college degree being more concerned about economic mobility than voters without a college education, and that such estimations played a relatively salient role in vote choice for Trump.

Therefore, the findings here as they relate to the broader hypothesis that Trump's victory was a "revolt" on the part of the White working-class are somewhat mixed. Indeed, the models indicate that White voters with a college education were more concerned than

those without a college degree about low levels of opportunity and downward economic mobility when casting their vote for President. In addition, when we compare the size of the coefficients for the items that represent White attitudes towards mobility to those in the previous sub-section concerning short-term economic assessments, we find that the latter constructs are the more robust predictors of vote choice for Trump.

Having assessed whether the short and long-term economic evaluations of White voters are significantly related to vote choice for Trump, the next sub-section turns to examine the ways in which anger towards Obama shaped voter perceptions of the relative pace of the economic recovery from the Great Recession. As will be clear, exploring the intersection between White's racial attitudes and their economic grievances is of critical importance in gauging whether the "left behind" thesis is a robust explanatory context for understanding White for choice in 2016. This is because the link between culture and economics is an important relationship that helps understand other right-wing populist movements and victories in a number of advanced Western democracies beyond the US (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018).

A Slow Recovery and Affect for Obama

In this sub-section, the chapter assess the robustness of the "left behind" thesis by quantifying the extent to which White racial attitudes interacted with the medium-term[39] economic assessments of White voters in 2016. These medium-term economic evaluations are useful to analyse in the context of the current chapter. This is because the recovery from the Great Recession was the slowest since the Second World War (Long and Luhby 2016) and was also overseen by the nation's first non-White President, Barack Obama. Refrains of working-class "anger" at elites for their perceived failure to address the economic grievances

[39] By medium term, I am referring to voter evaluations of the US economy since the 2008 recession.

are common in works of the left behind literature (McKenzie, 2017; Schrock et al. 2017). Importantly, however, the literature indicates that anger is an important substrate of Whites' racial attitudes (Banks and Valentino, 2012). If White voters were angry at elites (i.e. Obama) in 2016 because of the slow economic recovery, then, it is possible that that this anger was shaped by their racial attitudes.

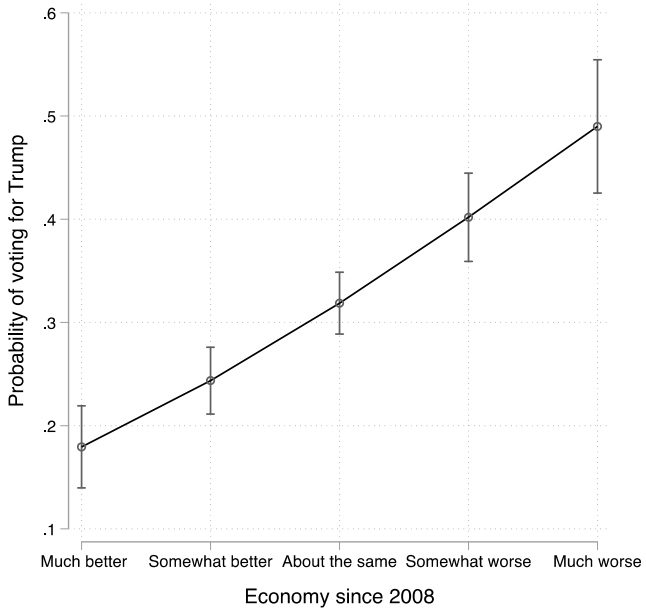
This is an especially important expectation to test; scholars have observed a "spillover" effect by which White racial attitudes have begun to feed into policy evaluations. Most notably, Tesler (2012), demonstrates that racial resentment fed into White Americans' opposition to the Affordable Care Act. Given this "spillover" effect, it could be the case that racial resentment is closely tied to anger felt towards Obama for overseeing a slow economic recovery, and that these evaluations were on the minds of White voters when casting their ballot for President in 2016.

First, it is necessary to quantify whether evaluations of the relative pace of the economic recovery since the 2008 recession were closely associated with vote choice in 2016. There is reason to expect that this may not be the case; consistent with the literature on "pocketbook voting", short-term economic assessments (that is, those within the past twelve months) are usually the most salient for voters (Nadeau and Lewis-Beck, 2001). To test whether medium term economic assessments were indeed associated with White vote choice in 2016, I re-estimate my baseline vote choice model. I use a five-point ordinal item from the 2016 ANES as my measure of medium-term economic assessments. The item asks whether the US economy was better or worse since 2008. After estimating the baseline model, I use postestimation and plot the predicted probability that a White voter will cast their ballot for Trump across levels of the key explanatory measure. The results are presented below in **Figure 4.4**.

As **Figure 4.4** demonstrates, increasingly dire evaluations of the robustness of the US economy since 2008 are associated with an increased probability of having voted for Trump in 2016. A White voter who believes that the US economy was "much better" in 2016 than it was in 2008 has just a .18 predicted probability of voting for Trump. By contrast, the same voter who believes that the US economy was "much worse" in 2008 than it was in 2016 has a .48 predicted probability of voting for Trump. Therefore, moving from positive to negative evaluations concerning the robustness of the economic recovery from the 2008 recession under Obama is associated with an increased probability of voting for Trump of 40 points.

While the results of **Figure 4.4** evidence a degree of association between evaluations of the US economy during the previous eight years of the Obama Presidency and voting for Trump, they do not help us uncover whether this association is a consequence of the interaction between anger towards Obama and White Americans' racial attitudes. One way to test the nature of this interaction is to examine the relationship between anger towards Obama and moderating effect of White racial attitudes on the probability of a White voter perceiving that the US economy in 2016 was worse than it was in 2008. To test this hypothesis, I use the 2016 ANES, which contains a number of items that gauge White Americans' emotions towards a host of political figures, as well as their racial attitudes. Consistent with the literature on the emotional substrates of Whites' racial attitudes (Banks and Valentino 2012), the effect of anger for Obama on the probability of believing that the US economy in 2016 was worse than 2008 should become more potent as we move from low resentment to high resentment on the racial resentment scale.

Figure 4.4: Vote Choice for Trump as a Function of White Voters' Evaluations of the State of the US Economy in 2016 Relative to 2008



Notes: Lines represent the predicted probability of voting for Trump by evaluations of the robustness of the US economy since 2008. Predicted values are calculated by holding gender, marital status, union membership, and region constant at female, married, union household, and South, while holding all other variables in model at their mean values. Model also controls for party ID, ideology, education, income.

Source: 2016 ANES

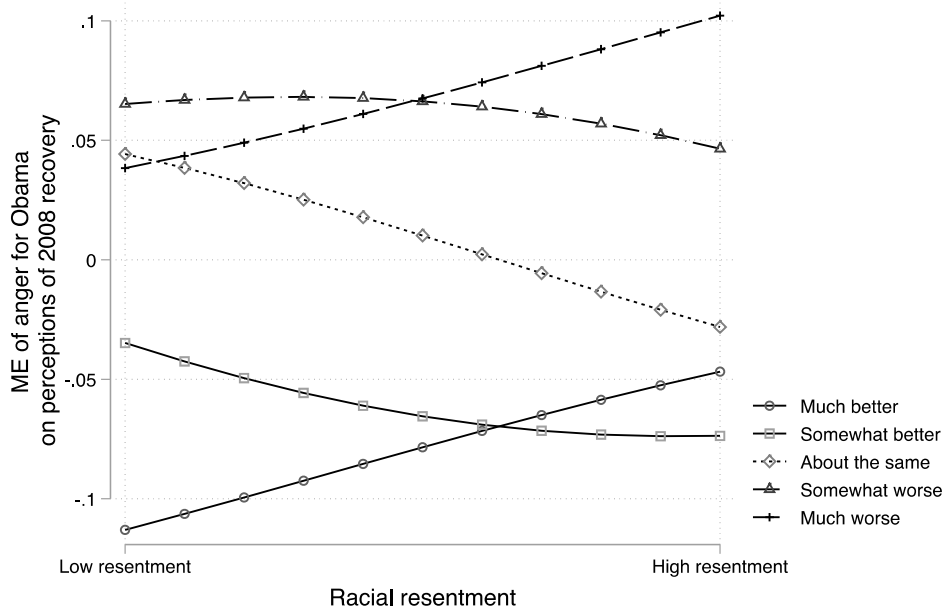
Obama affect is a 5-point ordinal item that asks respondents how often they feel angry towards Obama. Racial resentment is an additive index of four items from Henry and Sears' (2010) seminal index of symbolic racism. The additive index ranges from 4 to 20 with a Cronbach's α = .92. The first item asks respondents whether they thought Blacks have gotten less than they deserve. The second item asked respondents whether they thought past slavery makes life more difficult for Blacks today. The third item asked whether Blacks should work their way up without any special favors. And the fourth item asked respondents whether they thought that Blacks must try harder to get ahead. Items three and four were reverse coded so that a positive response equated to greater levels of resentment. With these measures, I

estimated an ordered probit model with the five-point ordinal item for evaluations of the US economy relative to 2008 as the dependent measure. I also specified an interaction term between the racial resentment scale and the Obama affect item.

Figure 4.5 plots the marginal effect of White voters' level of anger towards Obama by their levels of racial resentment. This figure begins to clarify whether affect towards Obama on the probability of evaluating that the US economy was worse in 2016 than in was in 2008 becomes more salient as Whites increasingly skew racially resentful. **Figure 4.5** demonstrates that, as one moves from low to high resentment on the racial resentment scale, anger towards Obama is associated with an increased probability of evaluating that the US economy was "much worse" in 2016 than it was in 2008. In sum, the results of the interactive model as graphed lend empirical weight to the hypothesis that voters' anger towards Obama was shaped by their racial attitudes.

This sub-section has found that voter evaluations of the robustness of the US economy in 2016 relative to 2008 was associated with voting choice for Trump in the election. Critically, however, we have seen that these evaluations are largely driven by anger towards Obama, and that this affect becomes more potent as Whites exhibit higher levels of racial resentment. The findings here are largely consistent with the "spillover" of White Americans' racial attitudes into policy evaluations (Tesler, 2012). However, they also build on such developments by demonstrating that racial attitudes which are specifically tied to affect towards Obama are an important moderator of voters' medium-term economic evaluations. These results thus begin to answer the second major research question posed in this chapter, which asks whether the "left behind" thesis is best understood as the interaction between a number of complex cultural and economic greviences. In the case of voters' economic evaluations during the time of the nation's first Black President, and whether these evaluations mattered in 2016, the answer is yes.

Figure 4.5: Evaluations of the State of the US Economy in 2016 Relative to 2008 as a Function of Anger for Obama, by Levels of Racial Resentment



Notes: Lines represent the marginal effect of anger towards Obama by White respondents' levels of racial resentment. Predicted values are calculated by holding gender, marital status, union membership, and region constant at female, married, union household, and South, while holding all other variables in model at their mean values. Model also controls for party ID, ideology, education, income. Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites only.

Source: 2016 ANES

The Spillover of Cultural Anxieties into Whites' Economic Assessments

Another critical dimension of the spillover of cultural cleavages into the economic assessments of 2016 White voters was the issue of immigration. As is the case with the salience of protectionist views among White working-class voters, those who tend to have salient views on the impact of immigration to the economy are those who perceive that that they have the most to lose economically from greater competition (Mayda, 2006). Specifically, concerns about the economic impact of immigration can be grounded in native-born workers' fears of having to compete with immigrants for jobs (Raphael and Ronconi, 2007).

The relationship between economic concerns and immigration has long been tested. High levels of immigration tend to coincide with concerns related to unemployment and economic decline (Pomper 1993). Recent evidence lends some weight to this observation. For instance, Kiguchi and Mountford (2019) find that an immigration "shock" (that is, a large influx of immigrants over a relatively short period) may lead to a temporary increase in unemployment. The literature also demonstrates that in-group beliefs about the state of the national economy, and individuals' personal economic assessments are closely related to negative beliefs about immigrants (Citrin et al. 1997). Critically, these concerns are articulated by elites with a preference for immigration restriction. Consistent with the literature on elite cues, elite messages about immigration may have a "priming" effect on the views of the American public, whereby some individuals may use economic criteria when thinking about immigration (Zaller 1992). Despite these important developments, however, relatively few studies have assessed whether these cues deployed by restrictionist actors have a salient effect on the vote choice among the economically anxious.

To highlight the important relationships between economic anxiety, immigration, and support for populist actors and initiatives, it is useful to consider the salient factors that created the conditions for Brexit in 2016. Using data from the 2014-2017 British Election Study, Goodwin and Milazzo (2017) found that economic pessimism and more specific concerns that immigration was bad for the UK economy were both significant predictors of the "leave vote" in the 2016 UK "Brexit" referendum. Similar to the ways in which the "Brexit" vote was shaped by specific concerns about the economic impact of immigration on the job prospects and economic security of native workers, some attention has been paid to the immigration views of the economic "have nots" that made up a significant proportion of Trump's base of support (Norris and Inglehart 2019). Critically, however, such studies have

not assessed whether immigration is an important moderator of the economic concerns of White voters.

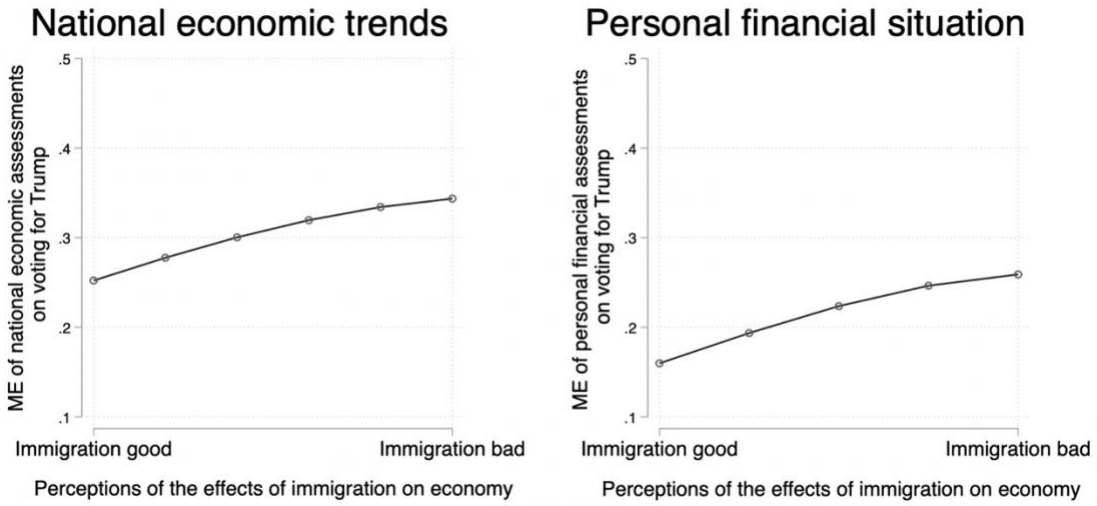
Here, however, I can test this relationship directly. This is important because it will allow me to assess whether White voters' concerns about the impact of immigration to the US labor market and economy are indeed an important moderator of voters' economic assessments. Specifically, I ask whether economic assessments are more associated with a higher probability of voting for Trump among White voters who believe that immigration is bad for the US economy and labour market. To assess this relationship, I again turn to the 2016 ANES, which includes a number of useful items that ask respondents about the economic impact of immigration. Here, I want to know if the effect of national and personal economic assessments on vote choice for Trump is more salient among Whites who view immigration as a detriment to the US economy and labour market.

Perceptions of the impact of immigration on the US labor market and economy are measured with an additive measure of two items from the 2016 ANES (Cronbach's α = .63). The first item is a 5-point ordinal item that asks whether immigrants are generally good or bad for the US economy. And the second item is a 5-point ordinal item that asks respondent's how likely it is that immigrants will take away jobs. The additive measure is coded such that a higher score corresponds to negative perceptions concerning the economic impact of immigration to the US. With this measure, I again re-estimate my baseline vote choice model with the addition of controls for White voters' assessments of the robustness of the national economy, and their degree of worry regarding their personal financial situation.

Does the effect of voters' economic assessments on the probability of voting for Trump become more salient as Whites increasingly perceive that immigration is bad for the US labor market and economy? **Figure 4.6** provides some evidence that this is the case. The graph plots the marginal effect of White voters' national and personal economic assessments

by their perceptions of whether immigration is good or bad for the US labor market and economy. **Figure 4.6** indicates that, as White voters increasingly believe that immigration is a bad thing for the job market and economy, their national and personal economic assessments are associated with a greater probability of voting for Trump. Overall, then, the results provide some evidence for the hypothesis that voters' economic assessments are shaped by concern over the economic impact of immigration.

Figure 4.6: Vote Choice for Trump as a Function of Voters' Economic Assessments by Their Perceptions of the Effect of Immigration on the US Labor Market and Economy



Notes: Lines represent the marginal effect of White voters' economic assessments by their perceptions of the effect of immigration on the US labor market and economy. Predicted values are calculated by holding gender, marital status, union membership, and region constant at female, married, union household, and South, while holding all other variables in model at their mean values. Model also controls for party ID, ideology, education, income.

Source: 2016 ANES.

In this subsection, I have explored the nature of the substantive interaction between White voters' economic assessments and views of the impact of immigration of the US labour market and economy on vote choice for Trump. Overall, the findings are important

because they highlight that the economic grievances intersect with cultural concerns of White voters about the economic impact of immigrants. More specifically, the evidence presented here demonstrates that the effects of White voters' economic assessments on the probability of voting for Trump are made more salient by their views on immigration. In this respect, the findings lend weight to the second research question posed in the current chapter. This question asks whether the economic concerns of White voters are better understood in light of the cultural changes[40] that have been taking place in advanced Western democracies such as the US in recent years (Eatwell and Goodwin, 2018).

However, exploring the extent to which racial attitudes and immigration views intersect with the economic assessments of White voters only partly answers this question. This is because another complex cultural factor that often intersects with the economic grievances of White voters are debates concerning the role that government should play in community life in areas that are "left behind" (Hochschild 2018; Wuthnow 2018). Consequently, the final sub-sections analyse the decline of "left behind" communities, White attitudes to government intervention in community life, and the vote choice of Whites who live in these areas.

The Decline of "Left Behind" Communities

One of the most important motifs in the ethnographic literature on "left behind" communities is a palpable sense of decline expressed by the residents of such areas. This sense of decline is made clear in residents' repeated observations that the main streets of their once-thriving communities are now full of empty stores and abandoned properties, and that there is a growing exodus of younger Americans from such areas (Cramer 2016; Vance 2017;

[40] For instance, higher levels of immigration.

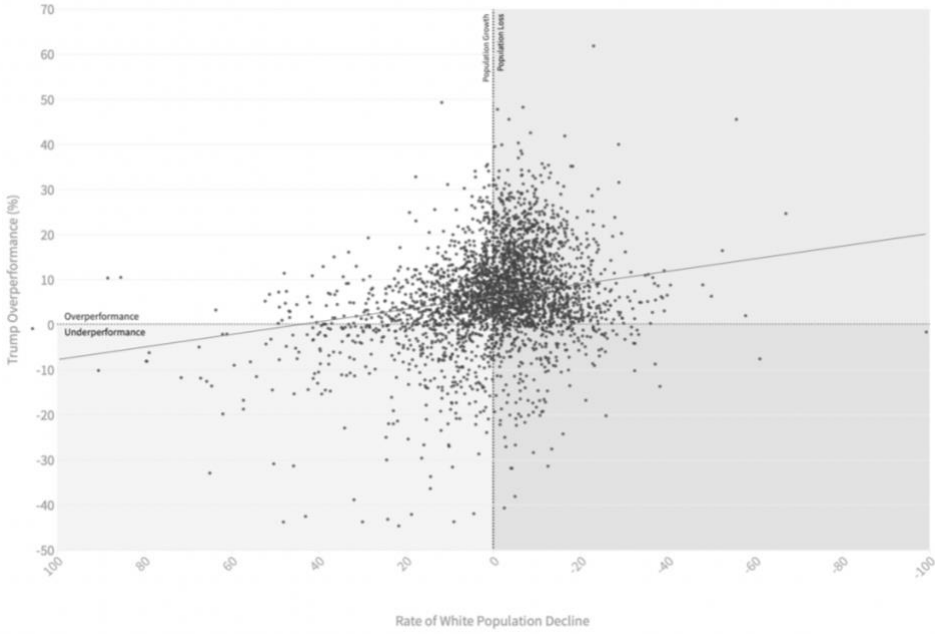
Wuthnow 2018). In sum, “left behind” areas are losing the essential precursor to the very idea of community itself - and that is people.

The exodus of younger Americans has serious implications for the robustness of community life in “left behind” areas; a sizeable working-age population is critical as local areas need a robust tax to pay for community infrastructure. This is a critically important observation - in Wuthnow’s (2018) ethnography of the American heartland, White residents spoke of an increasing resentment towards mainstream politicians for their perceived failure to help address the plights of their communities. Specifically, these plights were associated with concerns about declining tax revenues to pay for vital community infrastructure (Wuthnow, 2018, p. 165). Collective resentment can also be an important mobilizing force that drives White majorities to vote for populist actors (Bonikowski 2017). Therefore, assessing the extent to which population decline - and especially the exodus of working-age individuals from predominately White communities - is a critically important aspect of testing the robustness of the “left behind’ thesis. Consequently, this sub-section analyses the extent to which population decline is associated with increased support for Trump in the 2016 election.

To assess whether White population decline is associated with increased support for Trump, the chapter employs spatial linear regression modelling. Specifically, I test for a significant association between higher rates of White population decline and increased support for Trump relative to Mitt Romney in 2012 in US counties. To assess whether areas in which the non-Hispanic White population is declining are indeed trending more Republican over time, I analyse the relative change in the raw count of non-Hispanic Whites over time in a given area, as opposed to the percentage change over the same period. This is

because analysing the percentage change in White population in a spatial unit is not necessarily an accurate indicator of population decline for a given ethnoracial group.[41]

Figure 4.7: Trump Overperformance, by County-Level Rate of White Population Loss, 2000-2016



Notes: Spatial linear regression graph created by the Author using county-level election data from MIT Election Lab and county-level demographic data from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS) accessed via IPUMS NHGIS database. Points represent US counties. X-axis denotes rate of non-Hispanic White population loss between 2000 and 2016 by county. Y-axis denotes percentage change in county-level vote share for the Republican presidential candidate between 2012 and 2016.

Data source: MIT Election Lab /IPUMS NHGIS (2020)

The results from **Figure 4.7** indicate that counties with declining White populations are indeed trending Republican. However, they do not show what is driving this decline. One

[41] I adopt this analytical strategy because birth rates for Whites and non-Whites differ. For instance, non-Hispanic White Americans have lower fertility rates than Hispanics and African Americans (CDC, 2019). Thus, in some areas the non-Hispanic White population is increasing, but the non-White population is increasing at a faster rate relative to Whites because of the higher rates of fertility for non-White ethnoracial groups. It is possible, therefore, for the percentage of non-Hispanic Whites in a given area to be decreasing as a percentage of that area's population, and for the raw count on non-Hispanic Whites to be on the increase, too.

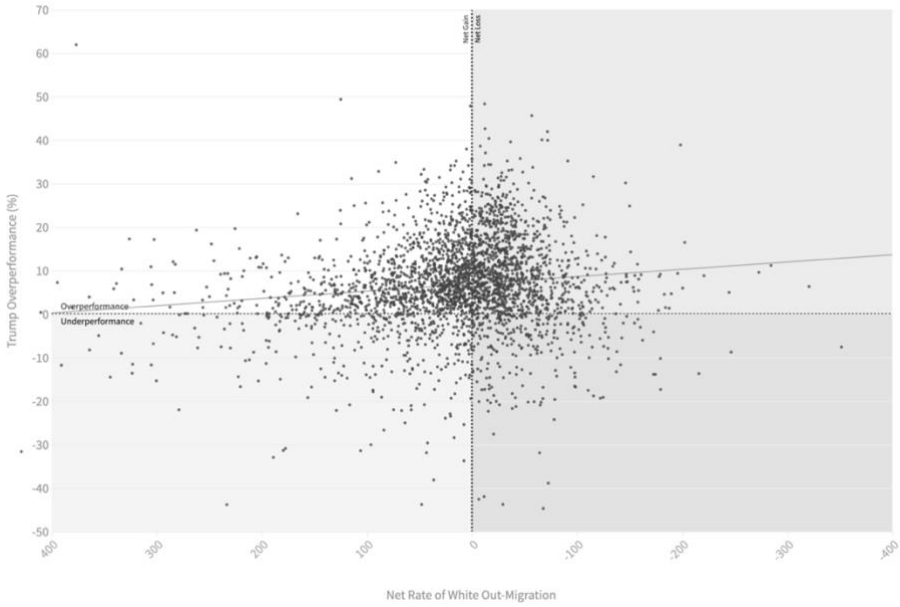
important and aforementioned factor is the exodus of younger Americans from "left behind" communities in search of better opportunities beyond their hometowns (Vance 2016).[42] To assess whether the exodus of predominately younger Americans is driving this decline, I also regress the net migration rate of prime working-age[43] non-Hispanic White Americans against the strength of Trump's performance relative to Romney in 2012 at the county level. The results of the spatial linear regression are presented below in **Figure 4.8**.

Figure 4.8 indicates a positive relationship between counties with higher rates of White outmigration and increased support for Republican presidential candidates between 2012 and 2016. The coefficient for the declining of prime working-age Whites in US counties is both larger and more significant than that for all Whites in the previous model (β = .026, p <.01). This finding is important because it indicates that the relationship between population decline and voting for Trump is stronger when we exclude Whites who tend to be less geographically mobile (for instance, those who are retired). Once again, the quadrant chart imposed on the graph helps to aid clarity on the classification of US counties. As indicated by the large number of counties located in the upper quadrants, Trump overperformed in a higher number of US counties relative to Mitt Romney. While most counties tend to cluster around the center, the densest cluster is located in the upper right quadrant, which represents counties with higher rates of White outmigration and where Trump performed stronger relative to Romney in 2012.

[42] The literature reveals an important tension between a desire to search for better opportunities beyond one's hometown, and the intensity of one's attachment to place. Immobility creates the conditions for out-migration. However, place attachment is a factor that many Americans must weigh against conceptualizations of immobility (Barcus & Brunn, 2009).

[43] I look at prime working-age Whites only as this particular cohort are more likely to migrate in search of better job opportunities than older Americans. Older Americans (i.e. those aged 55 or over) are less likely to migrate because they are more likely to be retired.

Figure 4.8: Trump Overperformance, by County-Level Rate of Prime Working-Age White Outmigration



Notes: Spatial linear regression graph created using county-level election data from MIT Election Lab and county-level out-migration data from the Applied Population Laboratory's Net Migration dataset. Points represent US counties. Y-axis denotes percentage change in county-level vote share for the Republican presidential candidate between 2012 and 2016. X-axis denotes the non-Hispanic White rate of out-migration for the 2000s decade (ages 25-54 only).

Data source: MIT Election Lab/University of Wisconsin (2020).

This relationship indicates a concerning trend for "left behind" areas. It is apparent from **Figure 4.8** that many counties which voted for Trump are experiencing an exodus of their prime working-age populations. In the academic literature, successfully upward mobility is highly correlated with one's ability to migrate to search for better opportunities (Herzog & Schlottmann, 1984; Eliasson et al., 2003). In areas with poor rates of upward mobility with limited job opportunities, therefore, out-migration among younger cohorts is especially prevalent as prime working-age adults leave their communities to search for work. Indeed, areas with higher rates of prime working-age outmigration are negatively affected

across a number of areas. For instance, communities lose a significant proportion of their tax base because of the exodus of prime working-age (and therefore taxpaying) adults from those areas. Ageing communities with declining working-age populations experience the effects of declining tax revenues (Felix & Watkins, 2013). A report from the Economic Research Service (ERS) confirms such trends, showing that non-metropolitan counties with higher rates of outward migration are, on the whole, less prosperous than counties with lower rates of outward migration (McGranahan et al., 2010). As a consequence, town councils have less money to pay for local infrastructure such as hospitals and doctors' clinics that are vital resources to the increasingly ageing populations of those communities.

The results of the spatial regression models are particularly significant in the context of the compounding effects of out-migration on "left behind" communities. The reasons for why "left behind" areas voted for Trump as a consequence of these changes also become clearer in this context. In what was a similar expression of populist sentiment, research has shown that areas with lower rates of social mobility were more likely to vote leave in the 2016 EU referendum (Sensier & Devine, 2017). Tellingly, areas that were among the most likely to vote to leave were more likely to be in Coastal areas with older populations (Johnston et al., 2016) and where out-migration of younger Britons is especially prevalent (Social Mobility Commission, 2019).

In sum, this sub-section has assessed whether White depopulation in US counties has led to such areas trending more Republican between 2012 and 2016. It is apparent from the results of the spatial regression models that counties experiencing White population loss as a consequence of out-migration are increasingly voting for Republican presidential candidates. Such findings confirm with trends observed in other advanced Western democracies such as the UK, where similar areas were more likely to vote leave in the 2016 referendum. To test whether this relationship is likewise robust when it comes to the evaluations of Whites who

live in “left behind” communities, the final sub-section uses individual level data to analyse the extent to which poor evaluations of community life are associated with having voted for Trump in 2016.

The Tension Between Left Behind Despair and Anti-Government Attitudes

This final sub-section assesses the nature of the interaction between Whites’ preferences for state spending and their evaluations of the quality of their local communities on vote choice for Trump. Gauging whether the intersection of preferences for lower government and despair at the quality of community life is associated with voting for Trump, is critically important if we are to assess whether both the cultural and economic grievances of “left behind” Whites help us better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018).

Authors of the “left behind” thesis make clear that Whites have poor evaluations of their local communities. These include dismay at the quality of local education (Duncan, 2014), healthcare services (Wuthnow, 2018), and infrastructure such as roads (Cramer, 2016). However, it is equally clear that, despite the lack of such resources, Whites do not trust government to provide an adequate response to the plights of their “left behind” communities. Indeed, A common refrain heard by Wuthnow (2018) during his ethnographic tour of the American Heartland when it came to government intervention in local community issues was the phrase “leave us alone!” (p. 101). White interviewees were dismayed at the top-down imposition of regulations from government that threatened to close vital local resources such as hospitals, and increase the cost of local infrastructure projects such as sewage systems (Wuthnow, 2018, p. 101). Likewise, the blue-collar Whites that Cramer (2016) interviewed for her ethnography of rural Wisconsin lamented the fact the Wisconsin state government was not run like a business. Many interviewees believed that there was a

dearth of accountability when it came to government spending and saw officials as distant figures lacking "real world" experience (Cramer, 2016, p. 174).

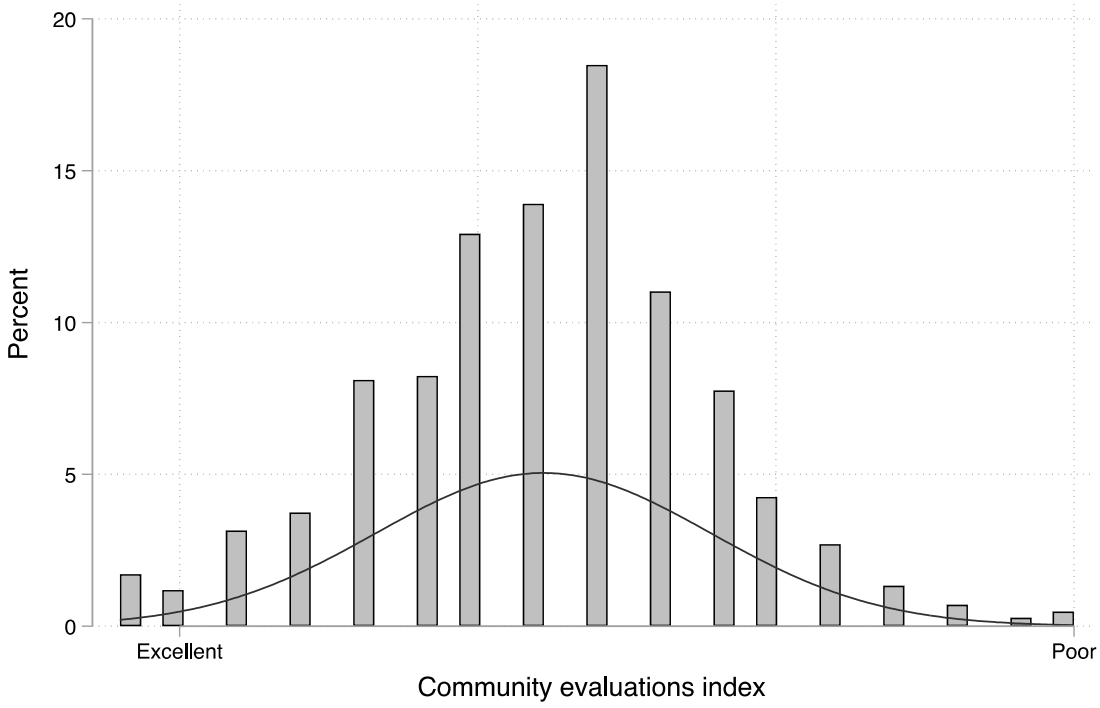
The complex interaction between the desire for less government and dismal evaluations of the quality of community life in the American Heartland has been the subject of a robust literature in the field of White Americans' political behaviour. This particular body of literature has focussed on why White voters in Trump country are perceived as voting for the Republican Party seemingly at the behest of their economic interests (Frank 2004; Hochschild 2018). On the one hand, these studies show that a significant percentage of Whites generally express a desire for less government in their local communities.[44] Equally, however, government is a vital organ for the very existence of the sorts of communities where Trump performed well in the 2016 election (Vance, 2016). This tension is especially salient if we consider that preferences for lower state spending are associated with greater electoral support for Republican candidates, who emphasise the importance of limited government when running for office (Arceneaux and Nicholson, 2012).

To assess whether Whites with poor evaluations of their local communities and preferences for less local government were likely to vote for Trump, the sub-section uses data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) from 2016. The 2016 CCES contains a number of useful items related to Whites' evaluations of the quality of their local communities across a range of areas, as well as preferences for less government in community life. For community evaluations, I create an additive index out of four items in which respondents had to grade their local community across four indices (Cronbach's α = ..75). These were the quality of local schools; the quality of local police; the quality of local roads; and the quality of local zoning and development. To get a better picture of how most

[44] Banks and Valentino (2012) posit that preferences for small government among Whites can be explained by both ideological conservatism and racialised attitudes towards spending for minority groups.

Whites rate their local communities, **Figure 4.9** is a histogram that graphs the distribution of responses across the community evaluations index. As indicated here, Whites give their local communities a slightly above-average grade across the four indices; the bell-shaped normal distribution curve is displaced to the left of centre on the graph, in the direction of more positive evaluations of community quality. Lastly, I also create an additive index out of four items where respondents were asked whether they wanted state spending increasing or decreasing for education, infrastructure, the police, and local hospitals (Cronbach's α = .56).

Figure 4.9: The Distribution of Community Evaluations among Whites



Notes: Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites only. Data are weighted.

Source: 2016 CCES.

With these items, I estimate a probit model for vote choice with the standard controls for socio-demographic factors. The results are presented below in **Table 4.6**. As evidenced

by **Table 4.6**, the coefficient for community evaluations in the vote choice model is positive and significant at β = .022, p <.05. It is important to note that, because the index has been scaled so that higher values are associated with poorer evaluations of one's local community, a positive coefficient is indicative of such evaluations being positively related to voting for Trump. By contrast, the coefficient for preferences for decreasing state spending is of considerably greater magnitude in terms of effect size and statistical significance than that for community evaluations (β = .192, p <.001). In substantive terms, this means that preferences for lower state spending was the more salient predictor of vote choice for Trump in 2016 than poor evaluations of one's local community.

While the vote choice model evidences a degree of association between poor community evaluations and preferences for lower state spending on voting for Trump in 2016, the chapter is also interested in assessing the nature of this interaction on voting for Trump. Specifically, it is important to know whether the effect of poor community evaluations on the probability that a White voter will cast their ballot for Trump becomes more salient as preferences for lower state spending increase. To test this expectation, I used postestimation and graphed the marginal effect of community evaluations on the probability of voting for Trump across the additive index for voters' state spending preferences. The results are depicted in **Figure 4.9**. If preferences for lower state spending are indeed a critical moderator of community evaluations (Frank 2004; Hochschild 2018), then we should expect to see a positive and upwardly-trending marginal effect as Whites increasingly believe that state spending should be lower.

Table 4.6: Probit Models of the Effect of Community Evaluations and Preferences for Local Spending on 2016 Vote Choice

	(1)
Poor community evaluations	.022*
	(.021)
Decrease state spending	.192***
	(.020)
Party ID	1.084***
	(.026)
Ideology	.631***
	(.020)
Age	-.048*
	(.021)
Female	-.108***
	(.018)
Married	.110***
	(.020)
Education	-.200***
	(.019)
Family income	-.086***
	(.022)
Union	.054**
	(.017)
Born again	.184***
	(.019(
South	.021
	(.015)
Constant	.091***
	(.018)
Pseudo R^2	.621
N	26,518

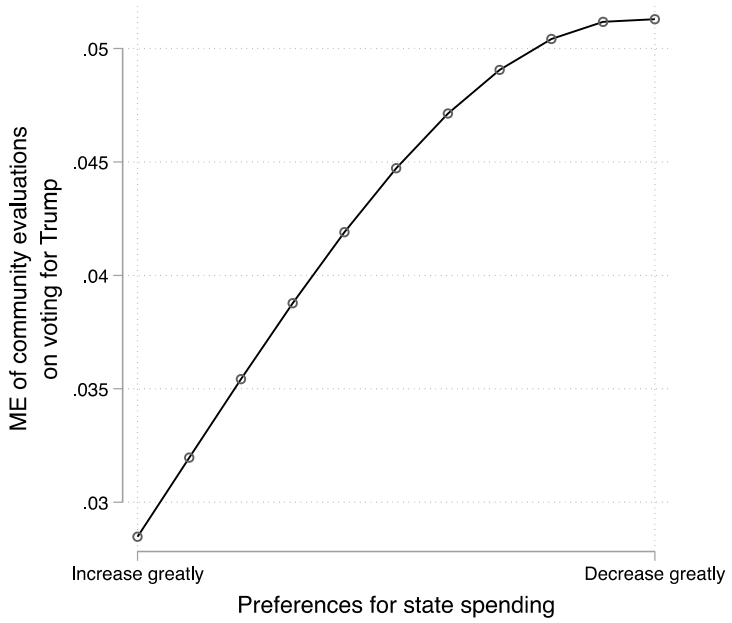
Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump where 1 = "Trump," 0 = "Clinton." Data are weighted. Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites who voted for Trump or Clinton. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 CCES.

Figure 4.10 indicates that, as a White voter increasingly believes that state spending should be reduced, poorer evaluations of one's local community are associated with an increased probability of having voted for Trump in 2016. Overall, then, the results provide some evidence in support of the hypothesis that the vote choice of White voters who had dismal evaluations of their local communities, and yet did not see more government as a

means of addressing their grievances, were more likely to vote for Trump than Clinton in 2016.

Figure 4.10: Vote Choice for Trump as a Function of Voters' Evaluations of Their Local Communities, by Preferences for State Spending



Notes: Lines represent the predicted probability of voting for Trump by evaluations of the quality of one's local community. Predicted values are calculated by holding gender, marital status, union membership, and region constant at female, married, union household, and South, while holding all other variables in model at their mean values. Model also controls for party ID, ideology, education, income.

Source: 2016 CCES

Conclusion

Chapter 4 has concentrated on answering the first research question posed in the introductory chapter, namely, is Trump's victory indicative of a White working-class revolt against the political elites in Washington for their perceived failure to adequately address their economic grievances? To answer this question, Chapter 4 has tested the empirical

robustness and validity of the "left behind" thesis as an explanatory frame for furthering our understanding of White Americans' electoral behaviour in the 2016 election.

The first test of the empirical robustness of the "left behind" thesis was to examine the extent to which Trump's victory could be characterised as "revolt" on the part of the economically-anxious White working-class. Here, the chapter found that, far from being representative of a successful mobilization of a significant cohort of previously non-voting working-class Whites, turnout for the socio-demographic group had increased by only 2 per cent between 2012 and 2016.

The chapter also analysed affect for Trump in the Rust Belt region in the Upper Midwest. Using spatial linear regression modelling, the chapter found that declines in manufacturing employed over time were not significantly related to increased Republican vote share in Rust Belt counties. Given this pattern of null results for the spatial models, the chapter also examined whether White voters who opposed outsourcing and free trade with other countries were significantly associated with vote choice for Trump. Here, the chapter found that White voters' opposition to outsourcing and free trade were significant predictors of vote choice. More importantly, however, these effects were intensified when both variables were interacted with the variable controlling for Rust Belt residency. I have argued that this makes sense, noting that the Rust Belt has experienced the effects of deindustrialization in a way that is more profound relative to other areas of the US, given the historically strong presence of "heavy industry" in the Upper Midwestern states. In light of this somewhat mixed pattern of results in the first three sub-sections, therefore, it is important to qualify that Trump's victory might not be completely representative of the mobilization of a cohort of "economically anxious" working-class White voters.

Next, the chapter explored whether Whites' perceptions of the relative speed of the economic recovery from the 2008 recession fed into affect for Obama. As aforenoted

analysing the relationship between evaluations of the economic recovery and affect for Obama was critically important in the context of the second research question that Chapter 4 sought to answer. This question asked whether Trump's victory on the part of White voters was better explained by the confluence of a number of economic and cultural factors that are becoming increasingly difficult to extricate. In support of this second alternative hypothesis, the chapter found that White voters who thought that the economy in 2016 was in a worse state relative to 2008 were likely to have voted for Trump. Moreover, these medium-term economic evaluations were likely to be tied to negative evaluations of Barack Obama, and became more potent as White voters' levels of racial animus increased. We also observed a similar effect on vote choice through White voters' concerns related to the economic impact that immigrants would have on the US labour market and economy. Here, Chapter 4 found that, as White voters become more concerned about the hypothesised negative impact of immigrants on the US economy, their negative national and personal economic assessments are associated with an increased probability of voting for Trump

In a final test of the second research question, the chapter probed why so many White Americans were perceived as voting for Trump largely at the behest of their own economic interests (Frank 2004; Hochschild 2018). To achieve this, the chapter explored whether Whites with poor evaluations of their local communities, but who likewise express an opposition to increased state spending and government intervention, were likely to have voted for Trump in 2016. Consistent with the extent theorising on the complex interaction between Whites' preferences for lower state spending and poor evaluations of community infrastructure (Cramer 2016), the chapter found that, as White voters' preferences for decreasing state spending become more salient, increasingly poor evaluations of community infrastructure were associated with a higher probability of a White voter having cast their ballot for Trump.

Having tested the empirical robustness and validity of the "left behind" thesis as a frame for understanding why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballots for Trump in the 2016 US Presidential election, the doctoral thesis now proceeds to test the robustness of the second principal explanatory context (cultural decline thesis) in the next chapter. In contrast to explanations rooted in "left behind-ness," the cultural decline thesis hypothesizes that Trump's victory is representative of the activation of a number of salient forms of White in-group identities/psychological predispositions (Kam and Kinder 2010; Jardina 2019; Thompson 2020), as well as prejudice towards non-White racial groups (Schaffner et al. 2018).

Chapter 5: Identity, the Other, and White Vote Choice for Trump

Introduction

The preceding chapter assessed the robustness of the "left behind" thesis as an explanatory context for Trump's victory in the 2016 election. Having explored this first explanatory context, the thesis now considers a second explanatory context for Trump's victory known as the "cultural decline" thesis.[45] The specific objective of this chapter is to assess whether the salience of a number of forms of White group identity, and forms of out-group prejudice towards non-Whites affected Whites' vote choice for US President in 2016. Meeting this objective is essential to meeting the broader objective of the doctoral thesis, which is to understand the salient predictors of White vote choice for Trump. The findings from this chapter will test the robustness of the "cultural decline" thesis as an explanatory context for why so many White Americans voted for Trump in 2016. As such, the findings will be also be comparable to those of the previous chapter. This will allow us to assess the salience of in-group identity and out-group prejudice as predictors of White vote choice relative to the proxies that measured White "left-behind-ness" in the upcoming discussion chapter. To meet the specific objective of the chapter, and the broader objective underpinning the focus of the thesis, therefore, the following questions are posed:

How is Trump's victory explained by high levels of cultural anxiety among White Americans? Is his victory indicative of?

[45] The crux of the "cultural decline" thesis is as follows: ethnoracial demographic change has engendered a sense of status loss among many White Americans, who feel that their dominant-group position is increasingly being threatened by non-White ethnoracial minorities (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). The literature indicates that perception of threat triggers "defensive" reactions from the dominant group (i.e. Whites), who place greater emphasis on the importance of group norms and identity while expressing increased negativity towards out-groups (Mutz, 2018).

i) The "activation" of salient forms of White in-group identity, including White ethnocentrism (Kam & Kinder, 2012), American ethnic identity (Thompson 2020), and White racial identity (Jardina, 2019)?

ii) High levels of resentment and animosity towards non-White ethnoracial groups?

The chapter tests **H3** and **H4** by using secondary survey data from the 2016 version of the Stanford University/University of Michigan American National Study (ANES). To measure forms of in-group identity, ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and White racial identity are operationalised into statistically measurable constructs using a number of items from the 2016 ANES. To measure forms of non-White out-group prejudice, the chapter relies on an additive index of the four items from Sears and Henry's (2010) seminal scale of racial resentment.

The chapter is structured as follows: the first principal section delineates the salient forms of White in-group identity (ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and White racial identity). It hypothesizes about the "activation" of such identities by radical right populist actors such as Trump, and whether Whites in 2016 were mobilized to vote for Trump as a consequence of these identities. The hypothesized effect of White in-group identity is explored in a series of vote choice models for each respective identity using individual level data from the 2016 ANES. Having analysed the salience of in-group identity on White 2016 vote choice, the chapter next turns to analyse the salience of the racial out-group prejudice on 2016 vote choice, exploring why racial resentment remained a significant predictor of Republican support in 2016 despite Obama not being on the ballot. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the significance of the findings concerning the "cultural decline" thesis and lays the groundwork for the final explanatory context to be explored in the next chapter.

Salient Forms of White In-Group Identity

The first aspect of testing the robustness of the “cultural decline" involves thesis analyses the salience of three forms of White in-group identity. These variations of White in-group identity have all been correlated with White vote choice to varying degrees. The first form of White in-group identity I analyse is ethnocentrism. As will be clear, ethnocentrism is more of a psychological disposition in which Whites favour members of their own group (i.e. other Whites). Conversely, the latter two forms of White in-group identity are more robust forms of group identity centered around an emphasis on the importance of immutable group traits. The first robust form of White in-group identity conceptualises the in-group along the lines of ethnicity and emphasises the importance of American ethnic identity. Meanwhile, the second robust form of White in-group identity conceptualizes the in-group along the lines of race and emphasises the importance of White racial identity. I unpack these forms of White in-group identify in three respective subsections by outlining: (**i**) the ways in which Trump mobilizes Whites around each particular form of group identity, and (**ii**) whether White Americans with salient levels of such group identities were predicted to vote for Trump as a consequence of those identities themselves.

White Ethnocentrism

Before assessing the hypothesised salience of ethnocentrism as a predictor of White vote choice in 2016, it is important to understand what I mean by ethnocentrism. By ethnocentrism, I am referring to the act by which an individual or a group of individuals from a common ethnocultural group judge another’s culture relative to the preconceptions of the values and standards their own ethnic culture. Ethnocentrism was first operationalized as a social science construct by the sociologist William G. Sumner. In the work Folkways ([1906]

2007), Sumner described ethnocentrism as the name for: 'the view of things in which one's group in the center of everything, and all others are scaled and made with reference to it' (p. 13).

Sumner's definition of ethnocentrism was refined by social theorists such as Theodor Adorno in The Authoritarian Personality ([1950] 2019). To Adorno, ethnocentrism was a co-articulation of the positive feelings felt towards one's ethnocultural group with the negative feelings expressed towards ethnocultural out-groups. Ethnocentrism is the result of the psychological process of "in-group out-group differentiation". This process formed the basis of psychological models of intergroup conflict (Levine & Campbell, 1972) and social identity (Turner & Tajfel, 1986); theories which helped as a means to understand modes of ethnocentric behaviour in a variety of contexts, including Americans' dating preferences, (Liu et al., 1995), American consumer behaviour (Lantz & Loeb, 1996), and disease avoidance (Navarete & Fessler, 2006).

The most important work in the ethnocentrism literature is Kinder and Kam's (2010) Us Against Them: The Ethnocentric Foundations of American Public Opinion. In Us Against Them, Kinder and Kam (2010) argue that ethnocentrism must be accounted for in research American political behaviour. Their analysis relies on a measure of ethnocentrism that utilizes measures of out-group hostility towards African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. With this measure of ethnocentrism, Kinder and Kam (2010) demonstrate that ethnocentrism is a robust explanatory measure that is independent of authoritarian and egalitarian attitudes, as well as political ideology. Importantly, they also find ethnocentrism to be a powerful predictor of American political behaviour in a variety of contexts, including public support for greater spending on border security, national defence, and combating terror.

Indeed, a significant body of literature finds that ethnocentrism drives and reinforces American public opinion across a range of salient political issues. Examples of such issues include preferences for immigration reduction (Wilson 2001; Banks 2016). Elsewhere, research finds that ethnocentrism is a latent trait that can be activated by salient external events such as terror attacks perpetrated by non-Whites (Kam and Kinder 2007). Indeed, negative ethnocentric stereotypes about Muslims have been shown to reinforce public support for the War on Terror (Sides and Gross 2013). Group-based ethnocentric dispositions also predict lower public support for public welfare spending during periods of macroeconomic decline (Kam and Nam 2008) and shape public opinion towards other areas of government spending including healthcare (Maxwell and Shields, 2014). The activation of ethnocentrism in all of these political contexts is dependent on resonance between in-group/out-group differentiation and a particular issue position (Kam and Kinder 2012). This resonance is achieved via rhetorical "frames" (Goffman 1974) that allow Americans to make the connection between such ethnocentric views and support for a given policy.

The Activation of Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism not only influences American public opinion towards across a variety of contexts. It also shapes American voting behaviour. The activation of ethnocentrism as a mobilizing factor in White vote choice in past Presidential elections was dependent on the presence of a non-White candidate (i.e. Obama) on the Presidential ticket of one of the major US political parties (Kam and Kinder 2012). The salience of such beliefs among Whites was evidence of a fear and distrust of the perceived "otherness" of Obama. Such feelings were embedded in both racial resentment (i.e. Obama being non-White), and religious intolerance because of the 'mistaken but widespread' belief that Obama was a Muslim (Kam and Kinder 2012: 334). Given that Obama did not run for President in 2016, however, ethnocentrism in

the 2016 election could not have been "activated" by the presence of a non-White candidate on the Presidential ticket. This observation means that we must consider the possibility that ethnocentrism was "activated" by other causes. Since Kam and Kinder's (2012) study, the literature demonstrates that ethnocentric attitudes can also be "activated" by radical political actors via the use of ethnic cues. These cues allow Whites to make the connection between their latent beliefs and support for a given message (Emerson et al. 2014; Bonikowski 2017).

Here, I hypothesise that Trump's negative framing of non-White ethnic groups through the use of ethnic stereotyping provided resonance between his rheotic and Whites' beliefs in negative group stereotypes.[46] The use of ethnic cues to mobilize political support among non-White groups is far from a new tactic (Valenzuela and Michelson 2016; Arora and Stout 2019). However, its use by ethno-nationalist actors to mobilise dominant majority ethno-racial groups such as Whites is becoming increasingly prevalent (Hassell and Visalvanich, 2015). The increased use of such strategies by actors such as Trump has important implications for the state of US ethnic intergroup relations (Orbe and Batten, 2017), which are becoming increasingly important as America becomes more ethno-racially diverse. This is to say that Trump's appeals to ethnocentric dominant-group aptitudes might prove salient as a short term-force to mobilize electoral support. However, in the long-term, an emphasis on negative stereotyping might only serve to further widen and exploit division along ethnic lines.

To assess this hypothesis, it first was necessary to operationalise ethnocentrism into a statistically measurable construct. To measure ethnocentrism, I rely on a series of items

[46] There is a litany of stereotyping throughout Trump's rhetoric for those with Latino origin alone. For instance, during his campaign launch in June 2015, Trump said of Mexicans: 'They're rapists' (Burns, 2015). Elsewhere when discussing the deportation of immigrants during the third Presidential debate in October 2015, Trump said: '[W]e have some bad hombres here [in the US] and we're gonna [sic] get them out' (McCann and Engel Bromwic, 2015). Emphasis added. Here, Trump is making a generalization that all illegal immigrants are of Hispanic origin, when the data show that this is not the case.

concerning group stereotypes from the 2016 ANES.[47] Overall, the items measure group stereotypes well. Industriousness and temperament are essential features of intergroup racial and ethnic stereotyping (Sigelman and Tuch 1997; Hurwitz and Peffley 1997). A single measure of ethnocentrism was computed out of the group stereotype items. The variable was constructed as:

Ethnocentrism = in-group favouritism[48] + out-group negativity[49]

Using this computed ethnocentrism[50] variable, I next assessed whether ethnocentrism was indeed a latent trait among White voters. If this were the case, we would expect White

[47] In these items, White respondents were presented with a seven-point scale on which they had to rate the characteristics of a given ethnoracial group. The scales were based on a series of paired antonyms. The first antonym was hardworking versus lazy. A score of 1 indicated that respondents thought all the people in a given ethnoracial group were hardworking. A score of 4 indicated that most people in the group were not particularly close to one end or the other. And a score of 7 indicated that most people in the group were lazy. White respondents were first asked to rate themselves on this scale. Afterward, Whites were presented with the same scale again, but were instead asked to rate African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. This process was then repeated for the second antonym – peaceful versus violent.

[48] In-group favouritism was calculated by summing the scores for the two ANES items in which White respondents had to rate their own group on the hardworking/lazy scale and peaceful/violent scale. The two items have a Cronbach's α = .76. This summed score was then divided by two to create an average score. Responses for the items in which Whites had to rate their own group were reverse coded so that a higher score responded to a higher rate of perceived in-group virtuousness. The formula for calculating the in-group favouritism score is:

In-group favouritism = ($trait_1$ in-group score + $trait_2$ in-group score) /2

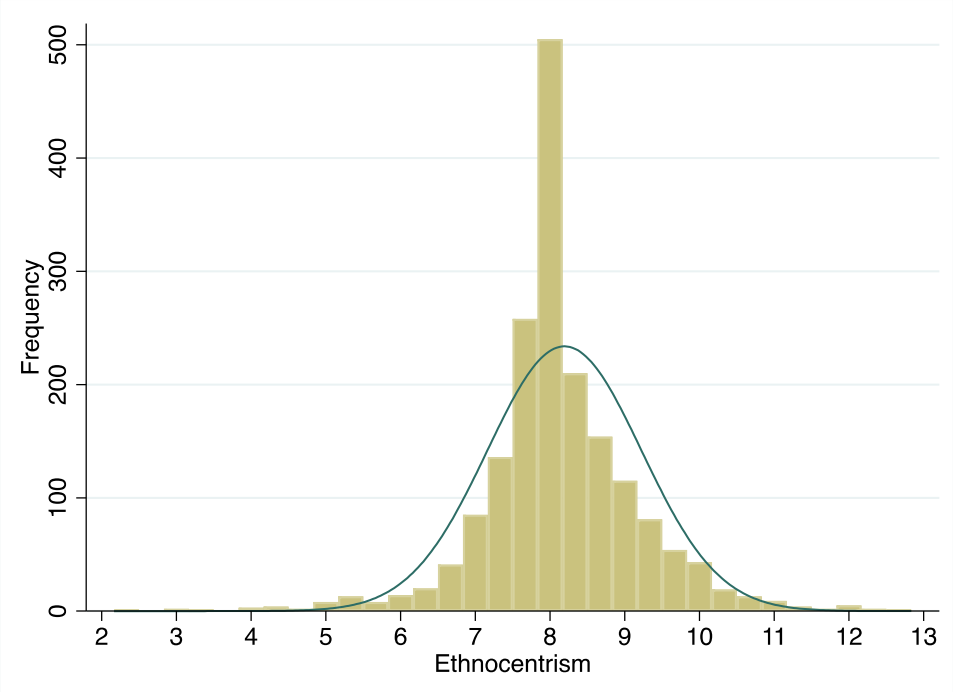
[49] Out-group negativity was calculated by summing the average scores for the six ANES items in which White respondents had to rate African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans on the hardworking/lazy scale and the peaceful/violent scale. Whites' ratings of non-White ethnoracial groups were averaged to create a single score for all out-groups across both scales. The two average scores were then summed and divided by 2 to create an average score that represented out-group negativity. Thus, the formula for calculating the out-group negativity score is:

Out-group negativity = ($trait_1$ average outgroup score + $trait_2$ average out-group score) /2

[50] The score for ethnocentrism ranges between 2 and 13. A maximum score of 13 represents an extreme form of White ethnocentrism where all members of the in-group are perceived hardworking and peaceful, while all out-group members are perceived as lazy and violent. Conversely, a minimum

voters in 2016 to skew more ethnocentric than xenocentric. **Figure 5.1** is a frequency plot that graphs the distribution of ethnocentrism among White 2016 Trump/Clinton voters. The data follow the bell-shaped curve relatively well, and White 2016 voters indeed skewed slightly ethnocentric; the curve is displaced away from the middle score of 7.50 to the right, and the mean ethnocentrism score was 8.03.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of Ethnocentrism Among White 2016 Voters



Source: 2016 ANES

Ethnocentrism as a Predictor of White Vote Choice

Having established that White 2016 voters skewed slightly ethnocentric, the next step was to assess whether ethnocentrism was a significant predictor of White vote choice for

score of 2 represents an extreme form of xenocentrism where all members of the in-group are perceived as lazy and violent while all outgroup members are perceived as hardworking and peaceful.

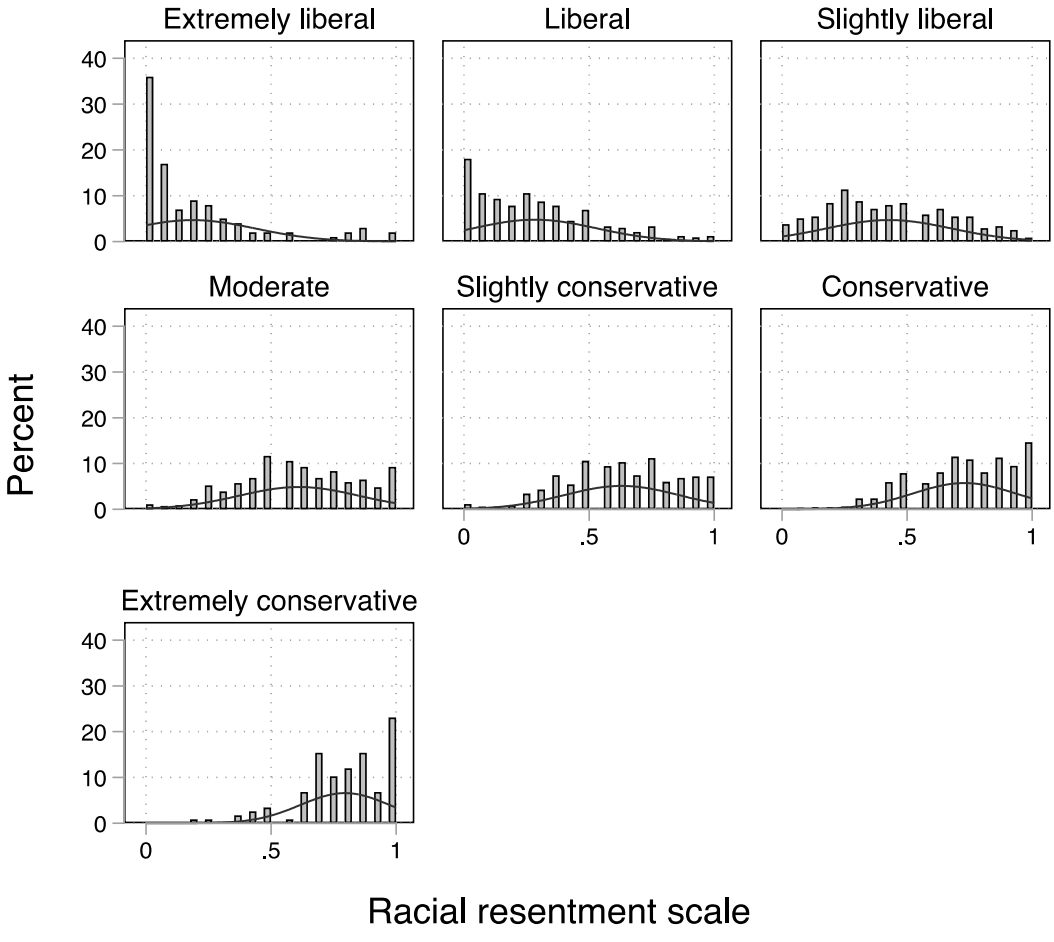
President. To do this, I specified a series of binomial probit models that predict vote choice for Trump. The probit models are presented in **Table 5.1**. The first model is a baseline model that contains the item for ethnocentrism, as well as a host of standard controls endemic to vote choice models including partisan identification, ideology, and sociodemographic indicators. Models 2 through 4 contain the addition of controls for salient forms of out-group to assess whether racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment reduce the effect size of ethnocentrism.

Before discussing the results, it is important to highlight the need to control for these factors in regression because of the close relationships between ethnocentrism and racism/anti-immigrant sentiment in the academic literature. Ethnocentrism is endemic of a broader, negative, reaction against putative outsiders. On the other hand, racism is a more specific form of group prejudice directed towards a given racial group or groups. Ethnocentrism thus functions as a broader framework in which individuals partition the world into "us" versus "them" (Kinder and Kam 2012). Viewing the world in this way paves the way for more specific variations of out-group resentment centered around race. Empirical findings from the literature lend weight to this hypothesis. For instance, when Kam and Kinder (2012) controlled for the effect of racial resentment in their regression models, the effect of ethnocentrism on Whites' opposition to Obama's candidacy was substantially reduced (p. 334). Despite Obama not being on the Democratic ticket in 2016, racial resentment continued to play a significant role in shaping White vote choice for Trump (Schaffner et al., 2018; Abramowitz and McCoy, 2019; Enders and Scott, 2019).

To get a more substantive approximation of where Whites are situated on the racial resentment scale, **Figure 5.2** is a histogram that plots the distribution of Kam and Kinder's four-item symbolic racism battery by political ideology. It is helpful to examine how level of racial resentment are distributed among Whites by political ideology so that we have an idea

of *why* racial resentment is important in the context of the doctoral thesis. Since White racial attitudes are known to be conditioned by socio-political orientations such as ideology (Wetts and Willer 2019), it is particularly important to understand whether effects of racial resentment on vote choice are driven by political conservatives, who tend to exhibit higher levels of racial resentment, or whether these effects are driven by political liberals, who exhibit lower levels of racial resentment (Enders 2019).

Figure 5.2: Distribution of the Racial Resentment Scale Among Whites, by Ideology



Source: 2016 ANES.

As evidenced by the top panel in **Figure 5.2**, White liberals exhibit relatively weak levels of racial resentment. This trend is most pronounced for Whites who consider themselves to be "extremely" liberal, as the bell-shaped normal distribution curve is displaced to the left on the graphs, in the direction of lower resentment. An opposite pattern of results can be seen for Whites who consider themselves political conservatives. Here, the normal distribution curve is displaced to the right on the graphs, in the direction of higher resentment, with this right-sided displacement being most pronounced among Whites who consider themselves to be extremely conservative. Among Whites who sit at the extreme ends on the 7-point political ideology scale (i.e., those who are either extremely liberal or conservative), those who are "extremely" liberal exhibit a mean of just .186 (SD = .251) on the normalised racial resentment scale. Conversely, those who are "extremely" conservative exhibit a mean of .795 (SD = .178).

Somewhat distinct from racial resentment, immigrant-based xenophobia and ethnocentrism are largely[51] hypothesized as being opposite sides of the same coin. Xenophobia can be thought of as an articulation of out-group negativity through its emphasis on a fear of ethnic outsiders such as immigrants. Since ethnocentrism is a co-articulation of both in-group favouritism and out-group negativity, therefore, it could be the case that ethnocentrism functions as a proxy for salient forms of immigrant-based xenophobia. Such fears are grounded in Americans' fears of economic competition and/or perceived threats to dominant-group culture posed by immigrants (Jaret 1999). Indeed, confirming such findings, ethnocentrism has been shown to predict White Americans' support for immigration restriction (Kinder & Kim 2010). Because of the significant relationship between xenophobia

[51] The psychology literature shows that in-group favouritism does not necessarily accompany outgroup negativity (Struch & Schwartz 1989). Indeed, confirming the independent effects of xenophobia and ethnocentrism in a cross-cultural study of 186 societies, Cashdan (2001) finds that ethnocentrism and xenophobia are 'largely uncorrelated', with the activation of such sentiments being dependent on different external causes (760).

and ethnocentrism, therefore, it is expected that anti-immigrant sentiment also reduces the effect of ethnocentrism on White vote choice for President when controlled for in regression.

Table 5.1: Probit Models Predicting White Vote Choice for Trump with Ethnocentrism Item

	Baseline	With Racial Resentment	With Anti-Immigrant	Full
Ethnocentrism	.573***	.026	.330*	-.061
	(.146)	(.171)	(.161)	(.178)
Racial Resentment		.390***		.348***
		(.047)		(.049)
Anti-Immigrant			.392***	.288***
			(.058)	(.063)
Party ID	.884***	.952***	.921***	.966***
	(.084)	(.097)	(.092)	(.101)
Ideology	.650***	.529***	.560***	.503**
	(.132)	(.149)	(.144)	(.104)
Female	.124	.069	.037	-.023
	(.247)	(.275)	(.263)	(.285)
Age	-.001	-.008	.002	-.003
	(.008)	(.009)	(.008)	(.009)
Married	.192	.185	.261	.196
	(.273)	(.303)	(.290)	(.310)
Education	.001	.084	.123	.187*
	(.163)	(.071)	(.071)	(.077)
Income	-.045*	-.050*	-.038	-.049*
	(.019)	(.022)	(.020)	(.022)
Union	.207	.188	.193	.245
	(.315)	(.369)	(.356)	(.388)
Born again	.713**	.918**	.793**	.929**
	(.266)	(.300)	(.286)	(.310)
South	.427	.191	.597*	.352
	(.267)	(.258)	(.290)	(.314)
Constant	-10.411***	-11.374***	-13.009***	-13.822***
	(1.588)	(1.816)	(1.870)	(2.064)
Pseudo R^2	.762	.820	.796	.833
N	1,050	1,049	1,045	1,044

Notes: Table entries are beta coefficients. Standard errors given in parenthesis. * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

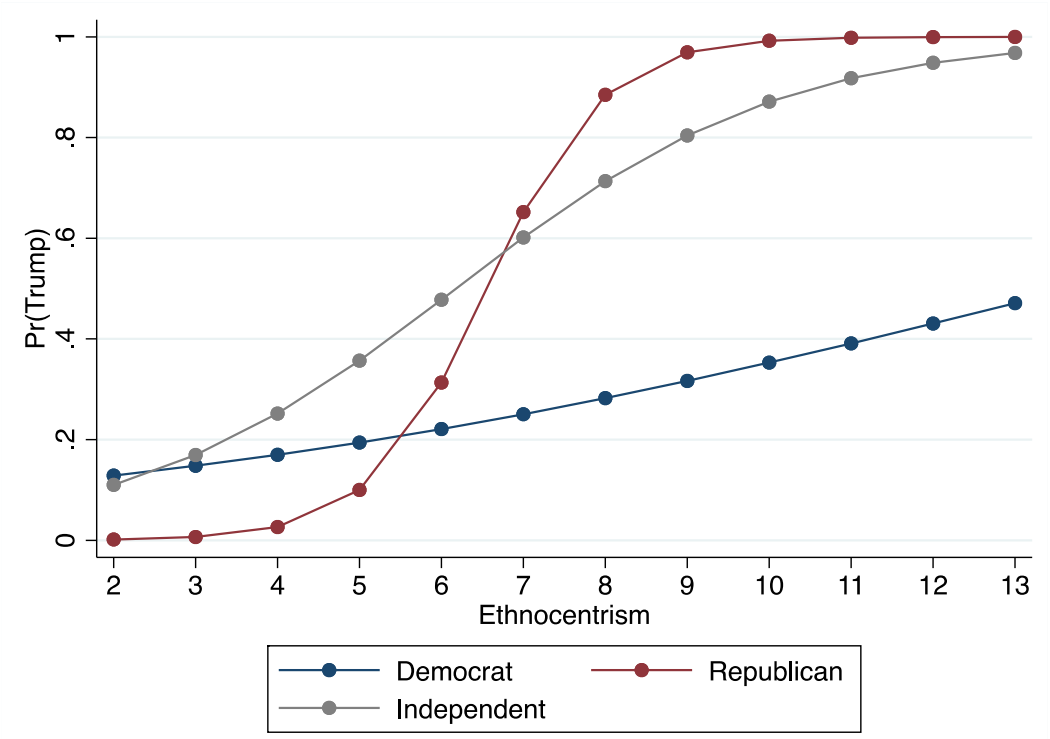
As indicated by the first column in **Table 5.1**, the baseline model performs well. As would be expected, Republican partisanship is the strongest predictor of support for Trump ($\beta = .573$). White 2016 voters who identify as ideological conservatives and Evangelical Christians are also statistically significantly predicted to vote for Trump - trends that are familiar and documented in the academic literature on vote choice for Republican presidential candidates in past elections (Patrikios 2008; Jacoby 2009). However, even with the addition of standard controls for vote choice, it is clear that ethnocentrism mattered in 2016; ethnocentrism is positively and statistically significantly associated with vote choice for Trump in the baseline model (β = .573, p < .001).

Models 2 and 3 control for the respective effects of racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment. Model 4 is a fully specified model that controls for both salient forms of out-group prejudice. High levels of racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment are statistically significantly (p < .001) correlated with vote choice for Trump among White 2016 voters. Both racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiments also substantially reduce the effect size for ethnocentrism on White vote choice. Controlling for racial resentment in Model 2 reduces the size of the standardized coefficient for ethnocentrism, such that β becomes weakly negative at the -.056 level. Controlling for anti-immigrant sentiment in Model 3 has a similar effect on ethnocentrism, reducing the standardized coefficient for ethnocentrism to β = .330. In the full model, the effect of ethnocentrism is reduced further to β = -.061. Importantly, controlling for racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment makes the effect of ethnocentrism on White vote choice in 2016 disappear statistically.

To better illustrate the effects of ethnocentrism, **Figure 5.3** graphs comparisons across categories of partisan identification. As **Figure 5.3** indicates, increases in rates of ethnocentrism equate to increased probability of voting for Trump among Whites who identify as Democrats, Independents, and Republicans, respectively. Despite this general

trend, however, ethnocentrism did not affect all White voters in the same way. Comparing across party categories, White Independents have greater probability of voting for Trump than White Democrats. The predicted probability of a Democrat voting for Trump exceeds that of a Republican among Whites with a score of 5 or less on the ethnocentrism scale. Interestingly, this means that Democratic xenocentrists are more likely to vote for Trump than xenocentrists who identify as Republicans. Nonetheless, the probability that a Republican will vote for Trump increases markedly as levels of ethnocentrism increase.

Figure 5.3: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for Trump by Ethnocentrism and Partisan Identification



Notes: Probit model contains the same controls for vote choice and as the baseline model but is re-estimated with the categorical variable for partisanship from the 2016 ANES (item V161155) instead of the 7-point party ID scale. Probit model contains a categorical-continuous interaction term between the partisan categories and the ethnocentrism variable. All covariates in probit model set to their means. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

Overall, these findings are consistent with my hypothesis that ethnocentrism was "activated" by Trump because of resonance between his rhetoric on minorities and the latent beliefs of many White Americans in the salience of negative group stereotypes. In past Presidential elections, ethnocentrism was "activated" by circumstantial factors such as the presence of a non-White candidate on the Presidential ticket - for instance, Obama in 2008 (Abramowitz 2018). However, the absence of Obama on the ballot in 2016 means that the salience of ethnocentrism in the 2016 election must be explained by other factors. The results are therefore important because they lend weight to the "cultural decline" thesis as an explanatory context for understanding why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center, 2018). Mutz (2018) hypothesizes that vote choice in 2016 was indicative of a "defensive" reaction on the part of Whites against putative outsiders. Indeed, the findings here indicate that Whites placed greater emphasis on the importance of negative minorities stereotypes, and that these factors were influential when Whites cast their ballot in 2016. While ethnocentrism is a salient predictor of White vote choice for Trump, scholars have also identified within Trump's rhetoric, and among many of his White supporters, an emphasis on the importance of American ethnic traits. Consequently, the next sub-section analyses the salience of American ethnic identity in predicting White support for Trump.

American Ethnic Identity

In these second of three sub-sections, I hypothesize that American ethnic identity was likewise a salient variation of White in-group identity that led Whites to vote for Trump in the 2016 Presidential election. Quantifying the extent to whether American ethnic identity is a salient form of in-group identity is critically important if we are to gauge whether the "cultural decline" thesis is a robust explanatory context that helps us better understand

Trump's victory in 2016. Norris and Inglehart (2019), posit that White Americans increasingly feel as though their dominant-group position is increasingly being threatened by non-White ethnoracial minorities. As more Whites become threatened, individuals increasingly place an emphasis on the importance of their in-group traits (Mutz 2018). Consistent with the "cultural decline" thesis, therefore, it could also be the case that Whites who value their identity as Americans placed an emphasis on the importance of such conceptualizations when casting their vote in 2016.

What is and What is Not American Ethnic Identity

Before I test the salience of American ethnic identity as a predictor of White vote choice, it is useful to define American ethnic identity. given the close relationships between both concepts in the literature. American ethnic identity is the articulation of a specific set of beliefs about what it means to be "true" American. Paralleling both ethnocentrism and White in-group identities, ethnonationalism is linked with an emphasis on in importance of the in-group – in this case members of the national ethnos[52]– at the expense of putative outsiders (Alba 1990; Citrin et al. 1990a; Citrin et al. 2001). Unlike variations of White in-group identity such as White identity, however, manifestations of American ethnic identity do not necessarily emphasise the importance of race. Instead, American ethnic identity considers WASP (that is, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) traits to be important markers of American identity. Consistent with ethnosymbolism theory (Smith 2009; Armstrong 2017), Those with

[52] Ethnos is interwoven with the notion of the nation-state. The Greek word ethnos embraced a wide variety of meanings in Ancient times. While it was translated as "the people", it also described the inhabitants of a "polis (city-state), or even a larger population in which people formed several "polies" (Hall 1997: 34). Therefore, the idea of "a people" and that of a state were seen as deeply intertwined. Herodotus, the Greek historian, defined Greek ethnos as a form of kinship of 'blood and speech, and the shrines of gods and the sacrifices that we have in common and the likeness of our way of life' (Kohn 1967: 52). In order to exist, therefore, an ethnos 'must have a name expressing group identity and a self-awareness of that identity as a group' (Smith 2003: 10). National ethnic identity is thus an integral part of national ethnos.

salient levels of American ethnic identity emphasise the importance of their American ancestry and nativity, and differentiate themselves from other ethnic groups via the use of 'cultural markers', such as their ability to speak English and their Christian faith (Kaufmann 2018: 7).

These criteria outlined by Kaufmann (2018) - specifically, European ancestry, speaking English, and being Christian - demonstrate what cultural markers make one a "true" American. Manifestations of American ethnic identity draws their roots from the 'myth' of WASP ethnicity (Kaufmann 1999: 448) WASP Americans trace their ancestry and lineage to Northern Europe (Kaufmann 2004). Indeed, as Lind (2010) notes, to be a 'genuine' American was to be a White of 'European descent' (64). Language is another marker that defines ethnonationalism. In the case of WASP ethnicity, the ability to speak English is an essential marker (Citrin et al. 1990b). The final essential cultural marker concerns religion, with WASP Americans being traditionally associated with variations of Mainline Protestant Christianity (Davidson et al. 1995). Altogether, these criteria provide a set resilient set of symbols that underpin a notion of "true" Americanness conceptualised along the lines of WASP ethnicity.

The Activation of American Ethnic Identity

During his candidacy, Trump explicitly appealed to ethnonationalist sentiments by emphasizing the importance of WASP traits. For example, the emphasised the importance of speaking English during the 2016 campaign (Rappeport 2015). Trump chided Jeb Bush during the primary debates for speaking Spanish during a campaign stop, saying 'we speak English, not Spanish' (Goldmacher 2016). However, as America has become more diverse, the prevalence of non-English languages (most especially Spanish) has increased in everyday life. Trump's emphasis on the importance of speaking English to conceptualizations of "true"

Americanness thus harks back to past nativist movements such as the official English language movement (Tatalovich 2015). An emphasis of the importance of such ethnic traits was also evidence that Trump was appealing to voters who believed in the importance of living in a predominately Anglophone nation (Stavans 2017).

Elsewhere, Trump has consistently emphasised the importance of American nativity for being a "true" American. For example, despite the US granting or example, despite the US granting right of birth within the nation- state (or jus soli) to children born in the US with few restrictions, Trump opposed the notion of birthright citizenship during the 2016 campaign (Giridharadas, 2015). He referred to the children born in the US to parents who were in the country illegally as 'anchor babies' (Kessler 2015). Trump also used the pejorative to refer to his opponent Ted Cruz, born in Canada to a Cuban father and American mother. During the primaries Trump questioned Cruz's Americanness at a campaign stop in New Hampshire, stating:

> 'Ted Cruz may not be a U.S. citizen, right? But he's an anchor baby. No, he's an anchor baby. An anchor baby born in Canada' (Diamond 2016).

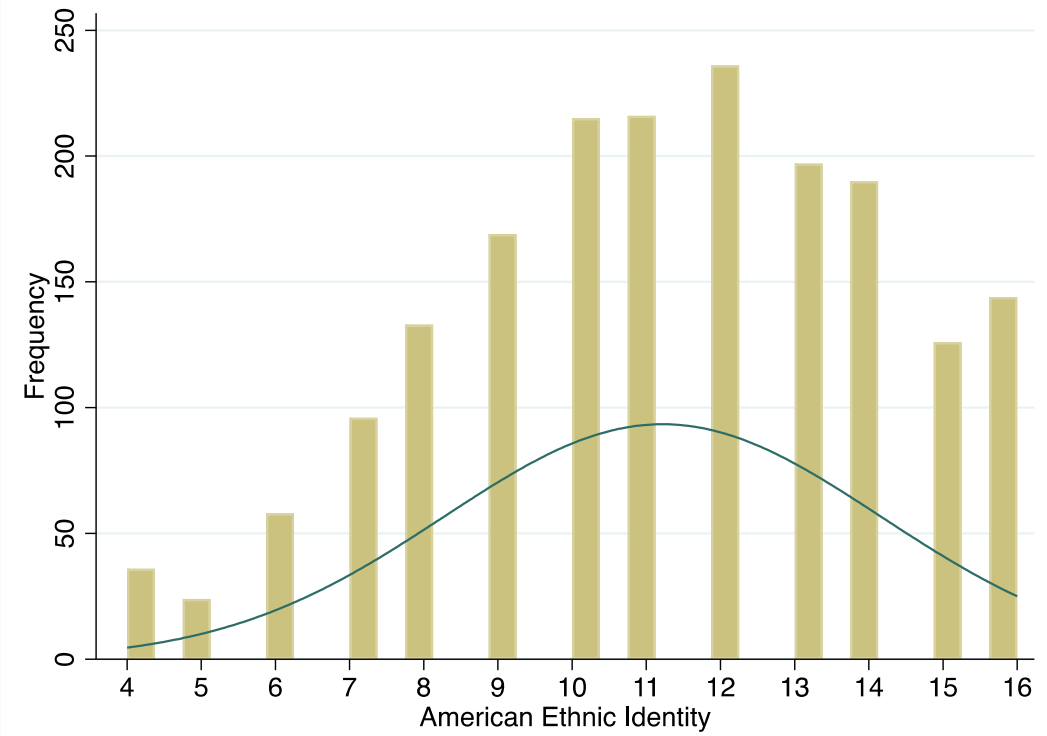
Trump's rhetoric on the importance of American ethnic traits also promoted a particular eschatology of America's future by highlighting the threat that putative outsiders and demographic change posed to the robustness of national ethnos. Trump's popular message to "Make America Great Again" was a hark to return America to an era of prosperity and global standing that had been lost in the intervening years. However, the message also had more nefarious undertones; throughout America's history, among the loudest voices to call for the restoration of American greatness have been those from the nativist movement, who have highlighted the "threat" that foreigners and ethnic outsiders pose to the perpetuation of national homogeneity (Ross, 1914; Grant, 1916). Indeed, 2016 was billed as the final chance

to preserve national greatness before demographic change meant that "Americanness" was lost forever. As former Republican Congresswoman Michelle Bachmann put it, 2016 presented a 'math problem of demographics and a changing United States' (Kirkland, 2016). She went further, saying 'if you look at the numbers of people who vote and who lives in the country and who Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton want to bring into the country, this is the last election' (Kirkland, 2016).

I measure American ethnic identity along these lines with a series of four items from the 2016 ANES. The four items asked respondents how important certain historical and cultural ethnic traits were to be a "true" American, including asking respondents whether the following were important for being truly American: (i) being born in the US; (ii) having American ancestry; (iii) one's ability to speak English; and (iv) following the customs and traditions of the US. All items were asked on a 5-point Likert scale, and possible responses ranged from 1 = "extremely important" to 5 = "not at all important". All items were reverse coded so that a higher score corresponded to higher levels of considered importance of a given ethnic trait for being a true American. The four items were computed into an additive index of ethnic identity (Cronbach's α = .805).

With this computed measure of American ethnic identity, I first analyse the distribution of ethnic identity to see if a majority of White 2016 voters considered such traits important proxies of "Americanness". **Figure 5.4** depicts the distribution of American ethnic identity among 2016 White Trump-Clinton voters. The data follow the bell-shaped normal distribution curve well, meaning that they are normally distributed. It is also evident from **Figure 5.4** that an emphasis on the importance of American ethnicity is a salient trait among White voters. The normal distribution curve is displaced away from a mid-score of 10 to the right.

Figure 5.4: Distribution of American Ethnic Identity Among White 2016 Voters



Source: 2016 ANES

American Ethnic Identity as a Predictor of White Vote Choice

Having demonstrated that American ethnic identity is a latent trait among White 2016 voters, the next step was to run the vote choice models to see if salient levels of American ethnic identity predicted vote choice for Trump. The results of the probit models predicting White vote choice with the American ethnic identity item are presented in **Table 5.2**. Model 1 is a baseline model that contains the American ethnic identity variable, as well as my usual sociodemographic controls for vote choice. Model 2 includes a control for racial resentment to assess whether anti-Black prejudice reduces the effect size of American ethnic identity. Model 3 contains the addition of the ethnocentrism item to see whether controlling for ethnocentrism reduces the effect size of American ethnic identity. Model 4 controls for both salient forms of out-group prejudice to assess whether racial resentment and anti-immigrant

sentiment reduce the effect size of American ethnic identity. Model 5 control for racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment alone. Lastly, Model 6 is a fully specified model that controls for ethnocentrism and both salient forms of out-group prejudice.

While the effect size of American ethnic identity does not rival that of partisanship, ideology, and Evangelical status in the baseline model, the effect of ethnic identity on White vote choice in 2016 is important. The baseline model indicates that American ethnic identity is a salient predictor of White vote choice; the effect of American ethnic identity on vote choice for Trump is positively strong (β = .355) and is statistically significant at the p <. 001 level. Nonetheless, it is important to note that, relative to the baseline model for ethnocentrism in **Table 5.1**, ethnocentrism has a stronger effect size (β = .513) than American ethnic identity when the exact same controls are specified in the probit model.

Directly controlling for ethnocentrism in Model 2 begins to clarify the interaction between ethnic identity and ethnocentrism. Controlling for ethnocentrism reduces the effect size of American ethnic identity to β = .319 relative to the baseline model. However, the effect size of ethnocentrism is greater than that of American ethnic identity in Model 2 (β = .360). Nonetheless, American ethnic identity is robust against the effect of ethnocentrism when it comes to levels of statistical significance; American ethnic identity remains statistically significant at the p <.001 relative to the baseline model. This suggests that ethnic identity is a predictor of vote choice that is relatively independent of the effects of ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism, conversely, remains a statistically significant predictor of White vote choice, although its level of significance is reduced to the p < .05 level. Model 2 thus indicates that American ethnic identity and ethnocentrism are both significant predictors of White vote choice.

Model 3 includes the additional control for racial resentment. As indicated by the third column in **Table 5.2**, controlling for racial resentment slightly reduces the size of the

probit coefficient for American ethnic identity (β = ..264). Nonetheless, the coefficient retains its statistical significance (p <.01). This finding is interesting because it suggests that racial resentment is not significantly mediating the effect of ethnic identity on vote choice for Trump. Given this finding, does including an additional control for anti-immigrant sentiment render the effect of American ethnic identity on vote choice insignificant? This test can be seen more clearly in Model 4, which controls for both salient forms of out-group prejudice. As indicated here, racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment reduces the effect of American ethnic identity, such that ethnic identity becomes only weakly positive at the β = .082 level. More notable however, is that controlling for racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment makes the effect of American ethnic identity on White vote choice disappear statistically. This finding indicates that the relationship between American ethnic identity and vote choice for Trump among Whites is more likely to run through anti-immigrant attitudes as opposed to racial resentment, thus lending weight to my theoretical expectations.

Model 5 controls for the effects of racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment only. As indicated here, the probit coefficient for racial resentment a positive predictor of vote choice (β = .694, p <001). Anti-immigrant is likewise a positive predictor of vote choice for Trump among Whites (β = .448, p <.001). However, its effect size is somewhat smaller than that of racial resentment, meaning that the former variable is the more robust predictor of vote choice for Trump. Finally, in Model 6, controlling for the effects of ethnocentrism and out-group prejudice does not substantially reduce the effect size of ethnic identity any further relative to Model 4; while American ethnic identity remains statistically insignificant, the effect size is remarkably similar at β = .081

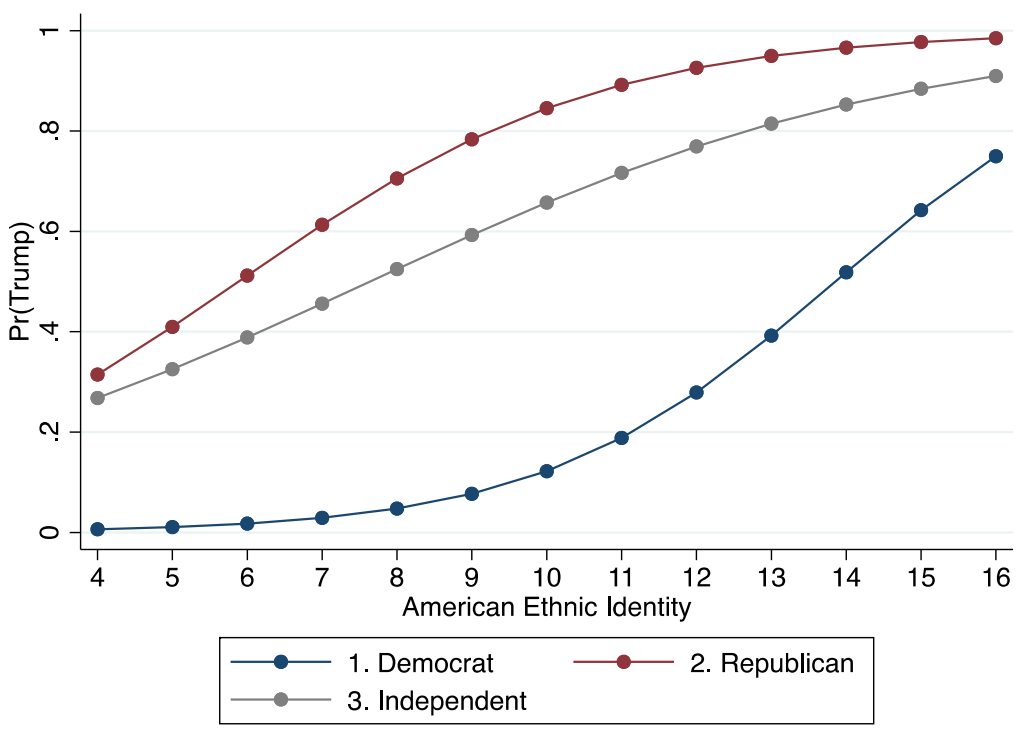
Table 5.2: Probit Models Predicting White Vote Choice for Trump with American Ethnic Identity Item

	Baseline	+ ethnocentrism	+ racial resentment	+ racial resentment and anti-immigrant	Racial resentment and anti-immigrant alone	Full
Ethnic Identity	.355***	.319***	.264**	.082	.	.081
	(.056)	(.057)	(.087)	(.067)		(.067)
Ethnocentrism	.	.360*	.	.	.	-.083
		(.022)				(.179)
Racial Resentment	.	.	.732***	.327***	.694***	.337***
			(.091)	(.047)	(.088)	(.050)
Anti-Immigrant	.	.	.	.259***	.448***	.259***
				(.067)	(.092)	(.068)
Party ID	.907***	.906***	1.103***	974***	1.068***	.972***
	(.089)	(.090)	(.090)	(.102)	(.091)	(.102)
Ideology	.635***	.599***	.424***	.497**	.412***	.491**
	(.140)	(.141)	(.109)	(.155)	(.116)	(.155)
Female	.118	.053	-.030	-.056	-.009	-.047
	(.252)	(.256)	(.064)	(.285)	(.066)	(.286)
Age	-.003	-.004	-.051	-.003	-.004	-.003
	(.008)	(.008)	(.071)	(.009)	(.078)	(.009)
Married	.150	.167	.035	.171	.075	.170
	(.284)	(.287)	(.069)	(.310)	(.073)	(.313)
Education	.019	.051	.007	.186*	.083	.191*
	(.065)	(.066)	(.076)	(.077)	(.078)	(.078)
Income	-.024	-.027	-.135	-.044*	-.171	-.045*
	(.020)	(.020)	(.081)	(.022)	(.090)	(.022)
Union	.192	.224	.014	.277	.014	.268
	(.337)	(.340)	(.062)	(.391)	(.065)	(.391)
Born again	.705**	.787**	.895**	.940**	.877**	.945**
	(.274)	(.280)	(.064)	(.310)	(.063)	(.312)
South	.367	.391	.051	.330	.088	.334
	(.275)	(.278)	(.068)	(.314)	(.069)	(.315)
Constant	-10.179***	-12.823***	-12.623***	-14.804***	-13.764***	-14.236***
	(1.299)	(1.792)	(1.536)	(1.755)	(1.930)	(2.105)
Pseudo R^2	.783	.784	.714	.835	.826	.834
N	1,061	1,048	1,052	1,057	1,610	1,042

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Standard errors given in parenthesis. *$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Data are weighted. Sample limited to Whites who voted for Clinton or Trump.

To better illustrate how American ethnic identity affected White voters, **Figure 5.5** plots the effect of American ethnic identity on the probabilities that White Americans voted for Trump by partisan affiliation. I begin first with White Democrats. At the lowest level of American ethnic identity, a White Democrat has just a .1 predicted probability of voting for Trump. By contrast, a White Democrat with the highest level of ethnic identity has a .75 predicted probability of voting for Trump. Thus, moving from least to most salient on the ethnic identity scale is associated with a 74-point increase in the predicted probability of a White Democrat voting for Trump.

Figure 5.5: Predicted Probabilities of White Americans Voting for Trump by American Ethnic Identity and Partisan Identification



Notes: Probit model contains the same controls for vote choice and as the baseline model but is re-estimated with the categorical variable for partisanship from the 2016 ANES (item V161155) instead of the 7-point party ID scale. Probit model contains a categorical-continuous interaction term between the partisan categories and the composite ethnic identity variable. All covariates in probit model set to their means.

Source: 2016 ANES

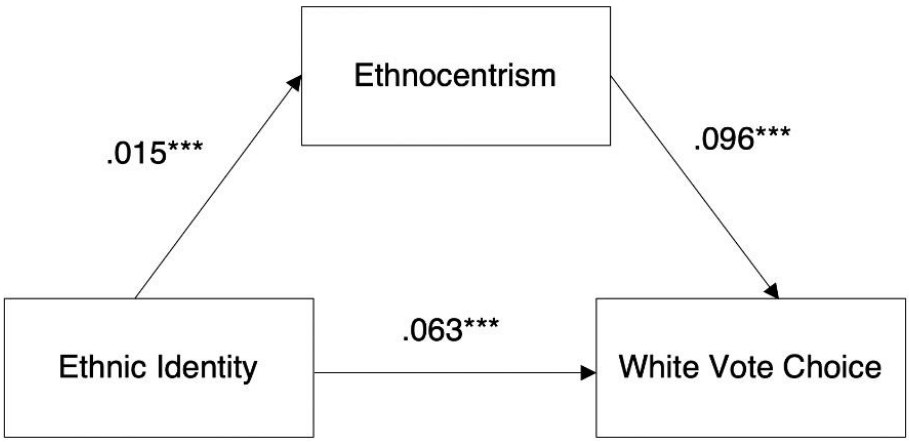
Next, a White independent voter at the lowest level of American ethnic identity has just a .25 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. Conversely, a White independent with the highest level of ethnic identity has a .76 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. Consequently, moving from lowest to highest levels of ethnic identity is associated with a 51-point increase in the predicted probability of a White independent voting for Trump. Lastly, a White Republican at the lowest levels of American ethnic identity has just a .32 predicted probability of voting for Trump. By comparison, a White Republican voter with the highest levels of ethnic identity has a .98 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. Therefore, moving from the lowest levels of ethnic identity to the highest along the scale is associated with a 66-point increase in the predicted probability of a White voter casting their ballot for Trump.

The Relationship Between American Ethnic Identity and Ethnocentrism

While the probit models in **Table 5.2** provide some evidence of a meaningful interplay between American ethnic identity and White ethnocentrism, this chapter is also interested in assessing the extent to which American ethnic identity and ethnocentrism are distinct constructs that shape White vote choice. This is important because it could be the case that ethnic identity is acting as a proxy for ethnocentrism or vice versa. To better quantify the extent with which American ethnic identity is a predictor of White vote choice that is independent of the effects of ethnocentrism, therefore, I specify a structural equation model (SEM). The SEM model uses a form of causal path analysis that assesses the direct effect of American ethnic identity on White vote choice, as well as any indirect effects by virtue of the significant positive relationship between American identity and ethnocentrism. If American ethnic identity is not a predictor of White vote choice that is independent of the

effects of ethnocentrism, we would expect ethnocentrism to be a substantial mediator of American ethnic identity.

Figure 5.6: SEM Model Showing Direct and Indirect Effects of Ethnic Identity on White Vote Choice



Notes: Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between ethnic identity and White vote choice as mediated by ethnocentrism. Structural equation model contains the same controls for vote choice as Model 2 in **Table 5.2**. ****p* < .001. Cases weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES.

Figure 5.6 presents the results of the structural equation model (SEM). The standardized coefficient between American ethnic identity and White vote choice for Trump was statistically significant (β = .063, p < .001), as was the standardized coefficient between ethnocentrism and White vote choice (β = .096, p <.001). The standardized indirect effect was (β = .015 x β. = .096), or β = .00144. As such, the total indirect effects were less than the total direct effect of American ethnic identity on White vote choice. The results indicate a

partial versus full mediation.[53] Nonetheless, a partial mediation is significant because it indicates that not only is there a significant relationship between ethnocentrism and White vote choice, but there is also a significant (albeit less salient) direct relationship between the American ethnic identity and the Trump vote. In sum, American ethnic identity and ethnocentrism are closely related yet distinguishable constructs that shape White vote choice. However, it seems that ethnocentrism is the more salient derivation of White in-group identity that predicts how Whites voted for President in 2016.

This second sub-section has explored whether American ethnic identity was a significant predictor of support for Trump. With a unique measure of American ethnic identity using items from the 2016 ANES, I have found using probit regression that Whites with salient levels of American ethnic identification were statistically significantly predicted to vote for Trump. However, given that American ethnic identity and ethnocentrism are closely related concepts in the literature, it was necessary to run the vote choice models with both measures to see which derivation of White in-group identity was the more robust in predicting support for Trump. The findings from this sub-section indicate that ethnocentrism was the more salient variation of White in-group identity in predicting vote choice for Trump.

Overall, then, the results are important because they lend empirical weight to the cultural decline thesis (Norris and Inglehart, 2019). Even though ethnocentrism is the more potent derivation of White in-group identity in explaining vote choice, it is important to note that the models indicate that these two distinct forms of in-group identity are, nonetheless, both significantly associated with voting for Trump. The findings thus lend credence to Norris and Inglehart's (2019) assertation that 2016 was a particularly salient year for radical populist actors such as Trump, who made concerted efforts to court White voters who were

[53] This is because the inclusion of ethnocentrism as a mediator variable in the SEM model does not eliminate the statistically significant direct relationship between ethnic identity and White vote choice.

concerned about America's cultural decline. Despite these contributions to the "cultural decline" thesis, however, it remains to be seen whether ethnocentrism is robust against the final form of White in-group identity – namely White racial identity. Therefore, the final sub-section analyses the robustness of White racial identity as a predictor of vote choice for Trump.

White Racial Identity

The chapter now turns to assess whether White racial identity is also a robust form of White in-group identity that predicted vote choice for Trump in 2016. Quantifying whether this is indeed the case is vitally important if we are to assess whether the cultural decline thesis is a robust explanatory context for understanding why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center, 2018). To make these contributions, the sub-section begins by exploring how White racial identity is theoretically distinct from the other forms of White in-group identity analysed thus far. I unpack two salient derivations of White racial identity – namely White identity and White group consciousness (Jardina, 2019) – outlining the key differences between the two constructs and hypothesising how both affected vote choice in 2016. Next, I run White identity and White group consciousness in two separate logit models to see which construct is the more salient predictor of vote choice for Trump. Lastly, I specify interactive models to see whether White racial identity is mediated by the effect of ethnocentrism - the more robust form of White in-group identity conceptualised along the lines of ethnicity.

What is White Racial Identity?

White racial identity is different from the two forms of White in-group identity discussed thus far. The first key difference is that White racial identity conceptualises White

in-group identity around race and not ethnicity. Whereas ethnicity-based identities define the in-group according to a common national, ancestral, linguistic, or cultural origin,[54] race-based identities define the in-group along the lines of shared racial features. The second key difference between White racial identity and ethnicity-based derivations relates to the ways in which political actors utilise cues to appeal to different ethnoracial groups. Political actors seeking to mobilize "the people" along the lines of ethnicity deploy ethnic cues as strategies of popular mobilization. Conversely, political actors mobilizing "the people" along the lines of race will utilise racial cues. Racial cues are 'prejudice relevant' signals that determine whether members of a given racial group perceive a political message or event as racially relevant (Hoggard et al. 2017: 411).

Trump's explicit appeals to race have been shown to make White Americans' racial attitudes more salient (Tesler 2017). There are two pervasive forms of Whiteness that were "activated" by Trump in 2016. These are White identity and White group consciousness (Sides et al., 2017; Jardina 2019). Before running White identity and White group consciousness in the vote choice models[55], it is useful to parse out the differences between the two constructs. White identity is a form of dominant group identity in which Whites identify with their own race. More than this, however, White identity is also a politicised identity - a 'lens through which many Whites interact and engage with the political world' (Jardina 2019: 40). Meanwhile, White group consciousness is a co-articulation of White racial identity and the specific set of politicised beliefs that Whites have about their own group. Racially conscious Whites therefore identify as White, feel that Whites are

[54] Or indeed a combination of these four ethnic traits.
[55] White identity is a single-item measure that askes Whites how important being White is to their identity. White group consciousness is a 3-item measure that includes the White identity item, as well as an item that asks how likely it is that Whites are unable to find jobs due to employers favouring non-Whites, and an item that asks how important is it that Whites work together to change laws that are unfavourable to Whites.

discriminated against as a racial group, and support collective action to maintain their dominant status (Jardina 2019: 41).

The theoretical differences between White racial identity and White group consciousness have important implications for their respective salience as predictors of vote choice for Trump. Jardina (2019) hypothesises that White group consciousness is more salient than White identity as a predictor of preferences for political candidates because the construct is more closely related to the political attitudes and behaviour of White Americans (41). Whites may identify with their racial group, but this identity alone is not necessarily enough to electorally mobilize Whites to vote for a given candidate.

White Racial Identity as a Predictor of White Vote Choice

Is Jardina's hypothesis robust to testing in the vote choice models? I now turn to test whether White identity and the three-item group consciousness measure predict vote choice for Trump. Once again, these models contain additional controls for both racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment. Racial resentment is important to account for given the close theoretical relationships between White identity and anti-Black attitudes (Jardina 2020). Similarly, Jardina (2019) posits that Whites' anxiety and concern for their ingroup plays an important role in shaping White opposition to immigration. Whites do not simply express a greater preference for restricting immigration because of group-specific outgroup attitudes (for instance, White animus towards Latinos). In fact, while these attitudes may be a factor in opposing immigration, the primary argument is that Whites are concerned that the large influxes of non-White immigration threaten their dominance over America's culture and it's political and economic institutions (Jardina 2019: 164). In this way, the effects of White identity on vote choice are also likely to be influenced by attitudes towards immigration. To test these hypothetical relationships further before running the vote choice models, **Table 5.3**

presents the results of two OLS models in which the single-item White identity measure and the three-item group consciousness measure were regressed against the anti-immigrant index. As indicated by **Table 5.3**, both the single-item White identity measure (β = .050, p <.001) and the three-item group consciousness measure (β = .076, p <.001) are positively related to the anti-immigrant attitudes index. In substantive terms, this means that higher levels of White identity and White group consciousness are associated with more salient anti-immigrant attitudes. The results of **Table 5.3** therefore provide empirical weight to the hypothesis that White racial identity is closely related to anti-immigrant attitudes.

Table 5.3: OLS Models for White Racial Identity Items and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

	White identity measure	Group consciousness measure
White identity	.050***	.
	(.005)	
White consciousness	.	.076***
		(.005)
Party ID	.053***	.042***
	(.008)	(.008)
Ideology	.064***	.058***
	(.008)	(.008)
Female	.004	.001
	(.005)	(.005)
Age	-.010	-.012*
	(.005)	(.005)
Married	-.001	.001
	(.006)	(.005)
Education	-.047***	-.042***
	(.006)	(.006)
Income	-.021**	-.016*
	(.007)	(.006)
Union	-.001	-.002
	(.005)	(.005)
Born again	.001	-.001
	(.005)	(.005)
South	.003	.002
	(.005)	(.005)
Constant	.390***	.392***
	(.005)	(.005)
R^2	.356	.398
N	2,011	1,988

Notes: Table entries are standardised OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 ANES

Having established that White racial identity is positively related to anti-immigrant sentiment, I now turn to present the results of the vote choice models. **Table 5.4** depicts the results of two probit models that predict vote choice for Trump. Model 1 controls for White identity, and Model 2 controls for the three-item group consciousness measure. It is clear from Model 1 that White identity is a weak predictor of support for Trump. As evidenced by **Table 5.4**, the single-item measure from the ANES is weakly positive at β = .068 and does not approach the conventional p <.05 benchmark for levels of statistical significance. Contrastingly, Model 2 indicates that White group consciousness is a stronger predictor of vote choice for Trump relative to White identity. The 3-item measure is positive at the β = .147 level and is statistically significant at the p <.01 level.

To better demonstrate the effects of White identity and White group consciousness on voting for Trump, I also graph the predicted probabilities that Whites voted for Trump at each level of White identity and White consciousness. The results of the postestimation are graphed below in **Figure 5.4**. I begin first with the results of the postestimation for White identity. Among those who thought that being White was "not at all important" to their identity, a voter has a .77 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. By contrast, those who thought that being White was a "extremely important" part of their identity have a .82 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. Therefore, moving from low to high importance along the White identity measure is associated with a 5-point increase in the predicted probability of a White voter casting their ballot for Trump. Lastly, the bottom panel in **Figure 5.4** depicts the results of the postestimation for the three-item group consciousness measure. As indicated here, a White voter with the lowest levels of group consciousness has just a .62 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. Conversely, a White voter with the highest levels of group consciousness has a .91 predicted probability of voting for

Trump. Consequently, moving from the lowest to the highest levels of group consciousness is associated with a 31-point increase in the predicted probability of a White voter casting their ballot for Trump.

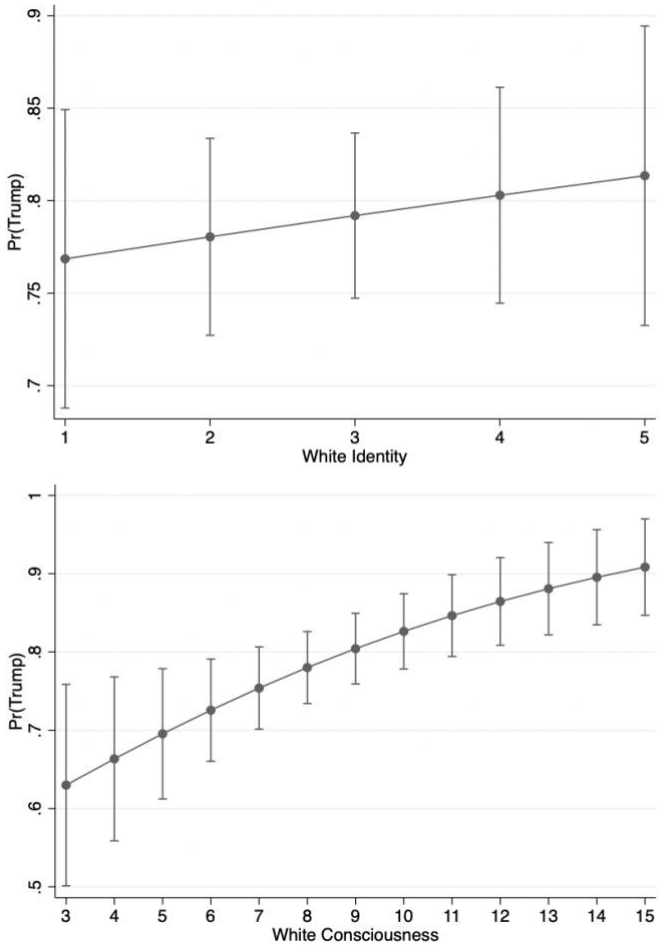
Table 5.4: Probit Models Predicting Vote Choice for Trump with White Racial Identity Items

	White Identity	White Consciousness
White identity	.068 (.094)	
White consciousness		.147** (.047)
Racial resentment	.341***	.336***
Anti-immigrant sentiment	.262***	.257***
Party ID	.878*** (.082)	.856*** (.084)
Ideology	.731 (.130)	.722 (.133)
Female	.222 (.241)	.110 (.248)
Age	.002 (.007)	-.001 (.008)
Married	.223 (.268)	.260 (.271)
Education	-.038 (.062)	-.014 (.063)
Income	-.047* (.019)	-.004* (.019)
Union	.169 (.306)	.171 (.313)
Born again	.604* (.260)	.674** (.265)
South	.428 (.260)	.403 (.264)
Constant	-5.921*** (1.011)	-6.989*** (1.071)
Pseudo R^2	.753	.759
N	1,054	1,046

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Standard errors given in parenthesis. * p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

Figure 5.7: Predicted Probabilities of Voting for Trump by Levels of White Identity and White Consciousness



Notes: Probit models contain the same controls for vote choice and as Models 1 and 2 in **Table 5.3**. All covariates in probit model set to their respective means. Vertical lines are 95 percent confidence intervals. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

The Relationship Between White Racial Identity and Ethnocentrism

The results thus far indicate that White consciousness is the more robust form of White in-group identity that predicts Whites vote choice for Trump. However, it is also necessary to consider the interplay between White consciousness and another salient form of

White in-group identity – namely ethnocentrism.[56] It could be the case that White consciousness and ethnocentrism are distinct forms of in-group identity that both mobilised Whites to vote for Trump. However, it could also be the case that White consciousness functions as a proxy for ethnocentrism or vice versa. Quantifying which form of in-group identity is the most salient predictor of vote choice is important if we are to understand whether the "cultural decline" thesis is a robust explanatory context for understanding why so many Whites voted for Trump in 2016. Consequently, to further test the robustness of the "cultural decline" thesis, I now turn to consider the nature of the relationship between White consciousness and ethnocentrism as predictors of White vote choice in 2016.

To determine whether Whites voters in 2016 with high levels of racial self-identification or group consciousness were also ethnocentric, I use correlation analysis. **Table 5.5** depicts the pairwise correlations between the single item for White identity and the composite measure of White group consciousness, and ethnocentrism from the 2016 ANES. Across both measures of White racial identity, the correlation is positive and statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level. Whites with salient levels of racial self-identification and group consciousness are also likely to be ethnocentric. Despite this correlation, however, it is important to note that the coefficients do not indicate a strong relationship.[57] Therefore, it can be said that ethnocentrism and White racial identity are relatively independent constructs.

[56] In White Identity Politics, Jardina (2019) analyses the nature of the relationship between American identity and White identity (pp. 119-122). However, Jardina (2019) does not analyse the nature of the relationship between ethnocentrism and White identity. This is an important lacuna, given that I have shown ethnocentrism to be the more salient form of White in-group identity than American ethnic identity in predicting White vote choice for Trump.

[57] A Pearson pairwise coefficient between 0.7-1.0 would be indicative of a strong correlation.

Table 5.5: The Correlation Between White Racial Identity and Ethnocentrism

	Pearson Correlation	p
White Identity	.295 (1,671)	**
White Consciousness	.438 (1,659)	**

Notes: Table entries are Pearson pairwise correlation coefficients. Number of cases given in parenthesis. ** p <.01. Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

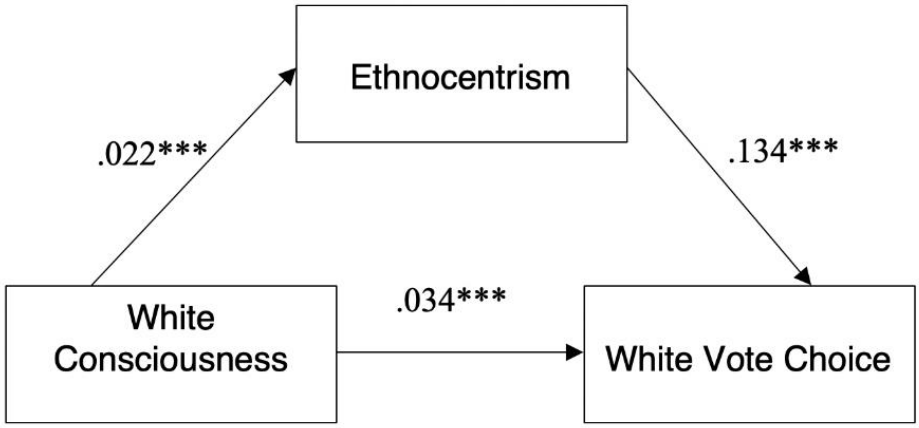
Source: 2016 ANES

To better assess the extent to which ethnocentrism and White racial identity are independent forms of White in-group identity that affected White vote choice in 2016, I specify another SEM model. This SEM model assesses the extent to which there is a significant direct effect between White consciousness and White vote choice for Trump when ethnocentrism is specified as a mediator variable (MV). For further evidence that White consciousness is an independent predictor of support for Trump, we would not expect to see a significant mediating effect on White consciousness by virtue of its significant positive relationship with ethnocentrism.

Figure 5.8 presents the results from the structural equation model (SEM). The results indicate that the standardised coefficient between White consciousness and vote choice for Trump was statistically significant (β = .034, p <.001). The significant relationship between ethnocentrism and White vote choice is also evidenced by the positive and statistically significant standardised coefficient ($\beta = .134$, p <.001). The standardised indirect effect for White consciousness as mediated by ethnocentrism was (β = .022 x β = .134) or β = .00294. The total indirect effects were therefore less substantial than the direct effect of White group consciousness. Consequently, that ethnocentrism was unable to fully mediate the effect of

White consciousness on vote choice because the predictor remained weakly positive and statistically significant. Thus, it is evident from the mediation model that White consciousness and ethnocentrism functioned as separate and distinct forms of White in-group identity that shape White vote choice.

Figure 5.8: SEM Model Showing Direct and Indirect Effects of White Consciousness on White Vote Choice



Notes: Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between white consciousness and White vote choice as mediated by ethnocentrism. Structural equation model contains controls for vote choice, sociodemographic indicators, and region. ***$p < .001$. Cases weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

In this principal section, I have analysed the salience of three forms of White in-group identity. Part of the contribution of this thesis to the White voting behaviour literature lies in the ability to (**i**) demonstrate which of these forms of identity were the more robust predictors of support for Trump, and (**ii**) whether or not they function as predictors of White vote choice that are independent of one another. The results indicate that the activation of three forms of in-group identity (ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and White racial identity) were important factors in the electoral mobilization of Whites in 2016. However, some forms are

more salient than others. White Ethnocentrism is the most salient derivation of White in-group identity formulated along the lines of ethnicity. Further, and despite the close relationships between ethnocentrism and ethnic identity in the literature, it is evident that both are distinct forms of in-group identity that shape White vote choice.

These salient forms of group ethnic identity are also distinct from those centered around racial identity. I find some correlation between White ethnocentrism and White racial identity, but the interactive models nonetheless indicate that the two are distinct and significant predictors of support for Trump among Whites. While I have quantified the extent to which in-group identity mattered in 2016, close attention must also be paid to the salience of Whites' animosity towards out-groups. This is because an essential dimension to the "cultural decline" thesis is Whites' animosity towards non-White racial groups and minorities (Mutz, 2018; Norris and Inglehart, 2019). As such, the chapter now turns to test the robustness of the "cultural decline" thesis further by analysing whether salient levels of racial prejudice explain why Whites voted for Trump in 2016.

Non-White Racial Prejudice

In this section I explore why racial resentment was such a salient predictor of White vote choice in 2016. I begin defining racial resentment and track the salience of racial resentment as a predictor of vote choice in the Obama era through to the election of Trump in 2016. Next, I unpack a framework developed by Whitley and Kite (2010) to understand the causes of racial resentment. I then operationalize items from the 2016 ANES into Whitley and Kite's (2010) hypothesized causes of symbolic racism. I assess the robustness of Whitley and Kite's (2010) framework by controlling for their causes of symbolic racism in regression. The purpose of testing for these causes in regression is to see whether any of the operationalized variables are linearly related with racial resentment among White 2016

voters.[58] Testing these hypotheses is critically important if we are to understand whether the "cultural decline" thesis is a robust explanatory context for understanding why 54 per cent of White voters cast a ballot for Trump in 2016.

Racial resentment is interchangeable with the idea of symbolic racism. Symbolic racism is a coherent belief system whose sentiments are manifested in a number of negative beliefs of African Americans. It represents a newer form of racism relative to more traditional forms of prejudice such as "old fashioned" or "Jim Crow" racism (Sears & Jessor, 1996; Tesler, 2012). These older belief systems incorporated the social distance between Whites and African Americans, were rooted in biological racism, and were characterised by support of formal discrimination and segregation (Henry & Sears, 2002, p. 253). Contrastingly, in their seminal measure of racial resentment, Henry and Sears (2002) define modern symbolic racism as Whites' endorsements of four specific beliefs:

1. That Black Americans no longer face much prejudice or discrimination.
2. That the failure of Black Americans to progress stems from their unwillingness to work hard enough.
3. That Black Americans are demanding too much too fast.
4. That Black Americans have gotten more than they deserve (Henry & Sears, 2002, p. 266).

Scholars of the voting behaviour literature have found that racial resentment was a salient predictor of 2016 vote choice among Whites (Hooghe and Dassonneville 2018; Abramowitz

[58] I also assess the robustness of racial resentment as a measure of Whites' racial attitudes to see whether racial resentment is merely acting as a proxy for other constructs. It is important to do so because the academic literature shows that racial resentment is closely related with individualist attitudes (Tarman and Sears 2005) or salient forms of broader resentment towards non-White ethnoracial groups (Enos and Carney 2018).

and McCoy, 2019).[59] It is important to note that the aim here is not to simply rerun the analyses from such studies. We know from these studies that racial resentment predicts vote choice for Trump. However, there is a paucity of knowledge as to why racial resentment was so salient in 2016. What follows in the analysis to come is my attempt to better understand the forces that explain racial resentment in 2016. To understand the importance of racial resentment as a predictor of White vote choice, it is also necessary to explore the salience of racial resentment before Trump in 2016. While the issue of race has long defined American electoral politics, I am referring specifically to the election of the nation's first non-White President in 2008, US President Obama.

A "Most Racial" America

It is important to begin by noting that racial resentment as a salient factor in White vote choice was primed by Obama and not by Trump. Tesler (2016) argues that the election of Obama to the US Presidency in 2008 did not usher in a "post-racial" America, but rather a "most racial" one. This "most-racial" context polarized mass politics by issues of race and racism (Tesler, 2015). The racialisation of American politics during the Obama era was reflected in trends of partisan realignment by which White Americans shifted towards the Republican Party. Tellingly, the most significant predictor of the shift of Whites towards the Republican Party during the Obama era was negative racial attitudes towards African Americans (Sides et al. 2017: 38). This trend plays out in analyses of the post-election data from 2016. For instance, Sides et al. (2017) find that Whites' attitudes towards Blacks were more significantly correlated with vote choice in 2016 than 2012.

[59] Across studies, racial resentment is measured with a composite variable composed of four items that are reflected in the beliefs outlined above.

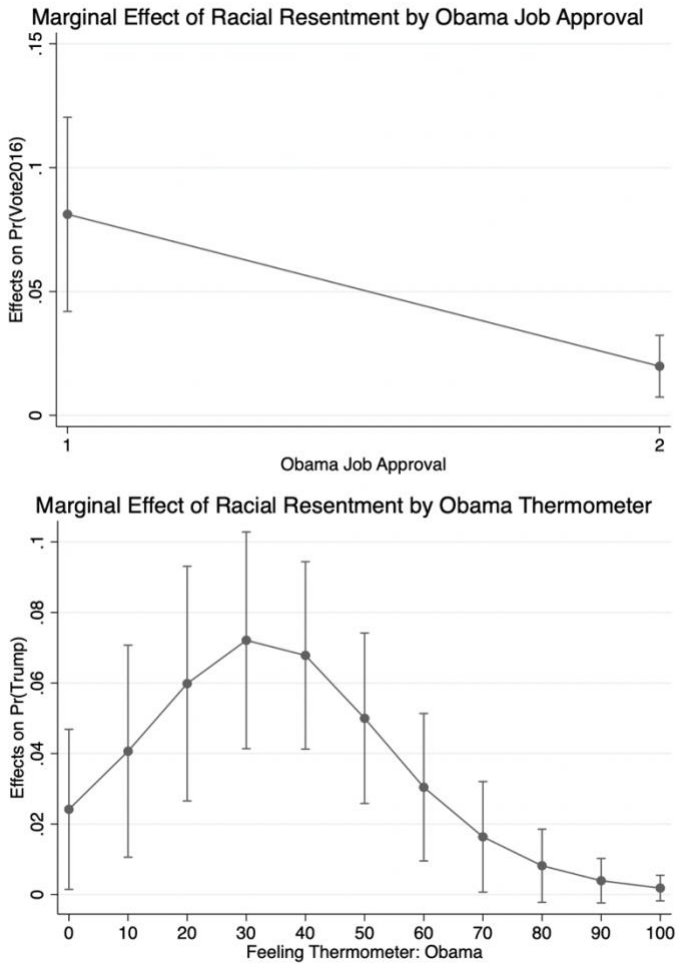
This "most racial" context is important because it explains why, even though Obama was not on the ballot in 2016, racial resentment was more salient as a predictor of White vote choice in 2016 relative to the 2008 and 2012 Presidential elections. If racial resentment was primed and made salient by Obama, then we would expect Whites' negative evaluations of Obama to mediate the effect of racial resentment as a predictor of White vote choice in 2016. To assess this hypothesis, I use two measures of Whites' evaluations of Obama as mediator variables (MV).[60] To quantify the extent to with salient levels of racial resentment in 2016 interact with Whites' negative feelings towards Obama, I estimate interactive models. These models start with the same variables as the baseline model but add an interaction term between the racial resentment scale and one of the two key explanatory variables (Obama job approval, and Obama feeling thermometer). I plot the various marginal effects[61] of racial resentment at the values of each of the explanatory variables in **Figure 5.8**.

These interactive models help to clarify whether the salience of racial resentment as predictor of White vote choice in 2016 is explained by Tesler's "racial spillover" thesis. The top panel in **Figure 5.9** graphs the marginal effects of racial resentment by Whites' approval/disapproval of Obama's job performance. Among Whites who approve of Obama's job performance, the marginal effect of racial resentment is 0.8 percentage points and is significant at the $p <. 001$ level. Among Whites who disapprove of Obama's job performance, the marginal effect of racial resentment is 0.2 percentage points. While levels of significance decrease, the marginal effect nonetheless remains significant at $p <.01$.

[60] The first measure is a categorical variable that asks Whites whether they approve or disapprove of Obama's performance as President. The second measure is a feeling thermometer where Whites had to rate Obama on a scale between 0-100. Because higher scores corresponded to warmer feelings towards Obama, the item was reverse coded so that a higher thermometer rating corresponded to cooler feelings for Obama.

[61] Each marginal effect is the change in probability associated with the racial resentment scale when all other explanatory variables are set to their respective means.

Figure 5.9: Marginal Effect of Racial Resentment in Interactive Probit Models



Notes: Interactive probit models contain the same controls for vote choice and sociodemographic indicators as the baseline model. Top panel contains categorical-continuous interaction term between Obama approval and racial resentment scale. Bottom panel contains a continuous-continuous interaction term between Obama thermometer and racial resentment scale. All covariates in interactive probit models set to their respective means. Vertical lines are 95 percent confidence intervals. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

A similar pattern emerges in the bottom panel of **Figure 5.9.** Racial resentment persists among Whites with lower levels of negativity towards Obama. However, when negativity towards Obama approaches a maximum score of 100 on the thermometer, racial

resentment no longer predicts vote choice.[62] The consistent results of both models is that racial resentment is mediated by attitudes towards Obama among those with negative evaluations of the 44th President, but persists among those with more positive evaluations. In sum, the interactive models indicate that Whites' opposition to Obama mediates the effect of racial resentment as a predictor of White vote choice in 2016. Racially resentful Whites are correlated with voting for Trump. However, it is clear that negative evaluations of Obama specifically fed into White racial attitudes. The empirical evidence thus lends weight to Tesler's (2015) "most racial" thesis. Thus, if we are to begin to understand the salience of racial resentment in 2016, it is useful to do so through this lens. The discussion so far has provided context as to why racial resentment remained a salient predictor of vote choice in the post-Obama era. The next step is to understand the specific determinates of racial resentment in 2016.

The Causes of Racial Resentment

To assess the significant drivers of racial resentment in 2016, I defer to an explanatory framework outlined in the academic literature (Whitley & Kite, 2010). Whitley and Kite (2010) outline six factors that feed into modern symbolic prejudice:

1. belief in equality of opportunity.
2. low belief in equality of outcome.
3. implicitly anti-Black effect and negative stereotypes.
4. racialised beliefs in traditional values.
5. group self-interest.

[62] Racial resentment becomes a statistically insignificant predictor of White vote choice for Trump past a negative score of 80 or higher on the Obama feeling thermometer.

6. low knowledge of Black people.

Modern symbolic prejudice, Whitley and Kite (2010) note, is rooted in the 'belief in equality of opportunity' (206). Equality of opportunity is underpinned by the idea of meritocracy – or the system by which individuals are conferred with success or power because of their abilities. Whites who believe in equality of opportunity are likely to emphasise the importance of individuals being able to have the same access to resources such as education. Belief in equality of opportunity is accompanied by low belief in equality of outcome. Equality of outcome, contrastingly, is a system that emphasises the need to eliminate material inequalities or other structural barriers to promote equality of condition. Low belief in equality of outcome therefore explains why so many Whites are supportive of the idea of racial equality, but do not often favour policies designed to address racial structural barriers, such as affirmative action policies in college admissions (Kluegel and Smith 1982).

Whites with racist beliefs also hold implicitly negative attitudes towards African Americans. These negative attitudes are manifested in belief in negative Black stereotypes. In addition, many Whites with symbolically racist views also have a racialised belief in the importance of "traditional values" such as industriousness and self-discipline. Whites with such beliefs are likely to think that the behaviour of Blacks does not conform along the lines of these "traditional" value sets. Whites with salient levels of symbolic racism also exhibit high levels of group-self-interest. Group self-interest manifests itself in the perception that Whites are discriminated against as a racial group. This arises because of the perceived deprivation of opportunities from policies designed to benefit non-Whites. It holds that Whites must work together if they are to protect themselves against initiatives viewed as potentially threatening to the interests of the dominant in-group. The final cause of symbolic

racism is a paucity of knowledge about African Americans. This paucity is explained by a lack of group contact with Blacks and may manifest itself in low levels of awareness of the structural inequalities that African Americans face as a consequence of their race.

Having unpacked these six causes of symbolic racism, the chapter proceeds to assess the extent to which Whitley and Kite's (2010) framework is a robust explanatory model for understanding the salience of racial resentment as a predictor of White vote choice in 2016. Specifically, I am interested in analysing whether these causes are linearly and significantly related to high levels of racial resentment among White 2016 voters. To empirically test this hypothesis, it was necessary to operationalise items from the 2016 ANES into measures of Whitley and Kite's (2010) causes of symbolic racism.

The first step was to then assess whether these operationalised measures were linearly and significantly related to racial resentment. As such, a series of multiple linear regressions were run to predict racial resentment from belief in meritocracy, negative Black stereotypes, White consciousness, and low levels of awareness of racial structural inequalities. The results are presented in **Table 5.6**. Across models, all five variables statistically significantly predicted racial resentment at the $p < .001$ level. To better illustrate the relationship between each of the predictors and racial resentment, I also plot each of the explanatory variables at each level of the dependent variable in **Figure 5.9**. Scanning across each of the panels in **Figure 5.9**, we can see a clear linear relationship between each of the predictors and racial resentment.

These predictors are also robust to controlling for vote choice and sociodemographic indicators. I find, consistent with the relationship between fundamentalist Christianity and racial attitudes in the academic literature, that racial resentment is particularly associated with Whites who identify as Evangelical or "born again" Christians (Calfano and Paolino 2010). I also find, consistent with the relationship between conservatism and racial resentment, a

correlation between racial resentment and Whites with an investment in ideological conservatism. The regression models indicate that racial resentment is also a function of low levels of education, suggesting that a more parochial ontology might increase one's level of racial resentment (Federico 2005). Even after taking these other variables into consideration, however, all items operationalised into measures of Whitley and Kites's (2010) causes of racial resentment are significantly related to racial resentment among White 2016 voters.

Overall, the results suggest that Whitley and Kite's (2010) model functions as a robust explanatory framework for understanding why racial resentment was an especially strong predictor of White vote choice in 2016. Not only are all predictors linearly related to racial resentment among 2016 the subset of White Trump/Clinton voters from the 2016 ANES, but it is also possible to discern which contribute to the model the more than others. As such, it is clear which of these known factors were the most salient in driving White's racial resentment. Indeed, the strongest predictors of racial resentment among White 2016 voters according to the full model was a belief in negative Black stereotypes (β = .572) and low levels of awareness of the structural barriers to equality faced by African Americans (β = 1.025). These findings are consistent with those of the academic literature, which report that salient beliefs in negative group stereotypes and a lack of awareness of out-group grievances are associated with a lack of intergroup contact (Dixon & Rosenbaum, 2004; Brambilla et al., 2012; Stathi et al., 2012).[63]

In this second principal section, I have provided context as to why racial resentment remained such a salient predictor of White vote choice relative to the 2008 and 2012 elections when Obama was on the ballot for President. Consistent with Tesler's "most racial" thesis, I have found using interactive probit models that Whites' negative feelings of disapproval

[63] The 2016 ANES does not contain an item asking Whites how much contact they report with non-White ethnoracial groups.

towards Obama mediate the relationship between racial resentment and White vote choice for Trump. Next, I applied Whitley and Kite's (2010) framework of the causes of symbolic racism to understand which predictors were most closely associated with salient levels of racial resentment among White 2016 voters. The results of the multiple regression models indicate that, while all of Whitley and Kite's (2010) predictors are linearly related to the racial resentment, some factors were more strongly associated with the dependent variable. These predictors were closely associated with a lack of intergroup contact (i.e. with between White Americans and non-White ethnoracial groups), which feeds into salient beliefs in negative group stereotypes.

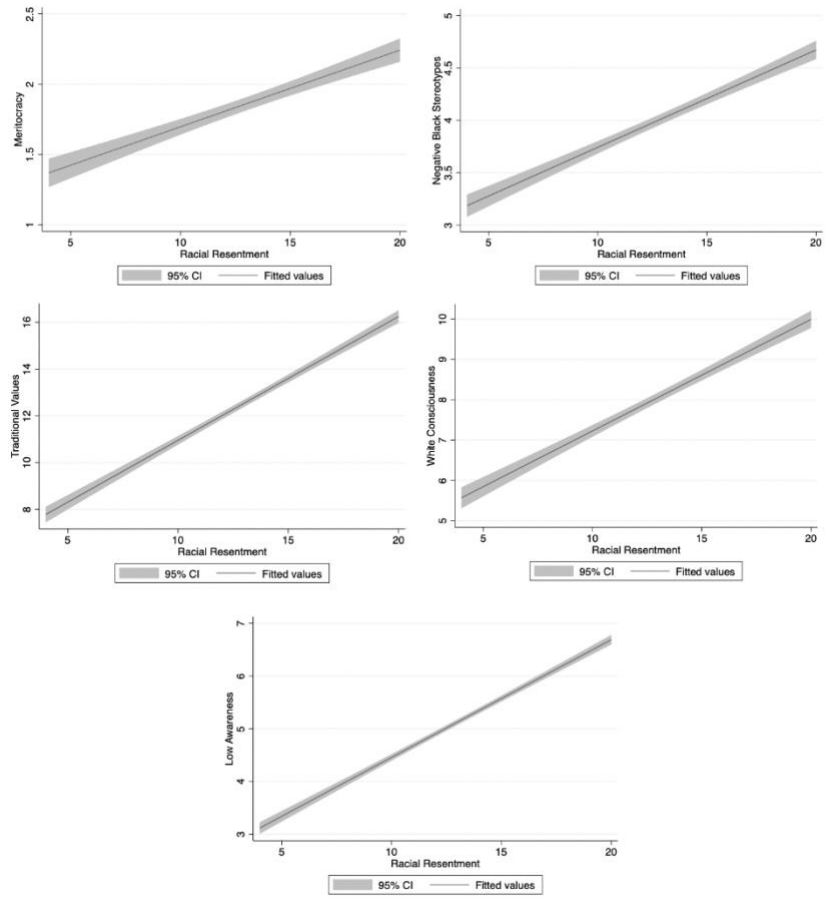
Table 5.6: Multiple Regression Analysis of Predictors of Racial Resentment

	With Meritocracy	With Negative African American Stereotypes	With Traditional Values	With White Consciousness	With Low Awareness	Full
Meritocracy	.435*** (.036)					.202*** (.033)
Negative Black Stereotypes		.984*** (.099)				.572*** (.085)
Traditional Values			.372*** (.037)			.170*** (.032)
White Consciousness				.399*** (.041)		.193*** (.035)
Low Awareness					1.499*** (.080)	1.025*** (.079)
Constant	7.515*** (.945)	5.377*** (1.038)	6.965*** (.976)	6.548*** (1.007)	4.660*** (.912)	1.116*** (.884)

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients, robust standard errors, and significance values (*** p <.001). Models also includes controls for party ID, ideology, gender, age, marital status, education, income, union status, Evangelical status, and region. Dependent variable is racial resentment scale. Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 ANES

Figure 5.10: Linear Regression Plots of Predictors of Racial Resentment



Notes: Graphs depict the relationship between each predictor against each level of the dependent variable racial resentment. Lines represent fitted values. Grey shaded areas are 95 percent confidence intervals. Models also include controls for party ID, ideology, gender, age, marital status, education, income, union status, Evangelical status, and region.

Source: 2016 ANES

The essential contribution of this second principal section to the academic corpus on White voting behaviour thus lies in the ability to discern which factors were most closely associated with salient levels of racial resentment among White 2016 voters. In doing so, they also lend empirical weight to the "cultural decline" thesis promoted by scholars of the 2016 vote choice literature (Mutz 2018; Norris and Inglehart 2019).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tested the robustness of the "cultural decline" thesis as an explanatory context for Trump's victory. The ethnoracial makeup of the US has changed profoundly since the passing of the 1965 Immigration Act. Subsequent demographic change in the past few decades means that Whites' numerical majority is shrinking. This change has begun to feed into a sense of loss and decline among White Americans. Today, many Whites feel that their dominant group position is being eroded by non-White ethnoracial groups, who compose an increasingly large proportion of the US population. The perception of threat has triggered a defensive reaction from White Americans, who in the 2016 election co-articulated an emphasis on the importance of in-group identity with broad levels of animosity towards America's racial minorities.

The critical aim of this thesis chapter was to test whether Whites with salient of cultural anxiety were predicted to vote for Trump. To do this, I asked two questions. The first asked whether Trump activated any particular form of White in-group identity (**H3**), and if so, which was the most salient. The results of the regression models indicate that White ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and White racial identity, are all salient forms of White in-group identity that predicted vote choice for Trump in 2016. However, we find variations in the respective salience of these identities. Ethnocentrism is more salient than American ethnic identity and is therefore the more robust form of White in-group identity articulated along the lines of ethnicity. White racial identity is also distinct from other forms of in-group identity that are conceptualised along the lines of ethnicity, and is likewise a significant predictor of White vote choice. The results indicate that the election of Trump marked a critical juncture where these previously dormant White in-group identities could be "activated" depending on the right message from a radical political actor.

Of course, White in-group favouritism is only one side of a two-sided coin. This brings us onto the second question the chapter aimed to answer, which was whether Trump's victory is also explained by salient levels of resentment towards non-White racial groups (**H4**). The answer to this question is yes; racial resentment predicts vote choice for Trump among White Americans. However, it is critically important to note that this animosity was not primed by Trump himself, but by America's first Black President. Consistent with Tesler's (2015) "most racial" thesis, Whites' negative feelings towards Obama mediate the relationship between racial resentment and vote choice for Trump. Understanding the salience of racial resentment in this context is vital if we are to begin to understand its causes. The results of the multiple regression models that operationalise Whitley and Kite's (2010) causes of symbolic racism into correlates of racial resentment clarify the drivers of racism in 2016. Because of these models, we now have better understanding of the salient cultural forces that shaped vote choice for Trump in 2016.

Given the statistical significance of the various constructs tested for in the vote choice models in this chapter, it is clear that the cultural decline thesis is a robust explanatory context for understanding Trump's victory in 2016. Having tested the robustness of the cultural decline thesis as an explanatory context for Trump's victory on the part of White Americans in 2016 with my tests of **H3** and **H4**, I proceed to test the robustness of the third and final explanatory context for White vote choice for Trump in the next chapter. Whereas in this chapter I have assessed whether Trump's victory is explained by the salience of various White in-group identities and high levels of racial prejudice towards non-White groups, the next chapter parses the relationship between diversity and vote choice for Trump.

Chapter 6: "Hunkered Down" or Mobilized by the Threat of Demographic Change? Diversity and Voting for Trump

Introduction

The previous chapter assessed the robustness of the "cultural decline" thesis as an explanatory context for understanding Trump's victory in the 2016 US Presidential election. This was achieved by analysing the salience of three psychological dispositions/white in-group identities (**H3**),[64] as well as the salience of out-group racial prejudice **(H4)** as predictors of White 2016 vote choice. Having considered this secondary explanatory context, the thesis now turns to analyse the third and final explanatory context for understanding White vote choice for Trump. This third explanatory context is the "changing America" thesis.

There are two competing hypotheses underpinning the "changing America" thesis, namely the "exit route" **(H5)** and the "voice route" **(H6)**. The "exit route" hypothesis contends that there is a link between increasing ethnic diversity and crumbling social capital in advanced Western democracies such as the US (Putnam, 2007; Murray, 2010; Abascal & Baldassarri, 2015). The hypothesis is based on the assumption that diversity causes Whites to withdraw from aspects of public and civic life - including formal participation in politics such as voting in elections. Conversely, the "voice route" hypothesis contends that the threat of diversity might actually mobilise Whites to vote (Major et al., 2018). The hypothesis being that Whites express negative attitudes towards increasing ethno-racial diversity and vote for radical right populist actors such as Trump, who promise to reduce immigration (Kaufmann & Goodwin, 2018).

[64] Namely White ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and White identity.

The objective of this chapter is to test the robustness of Putnam's (2007) and Kaufmann and Goodwin's (2018) hypotheses as frames through which we can better understand why 54 per cent of Whites voted for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). Meeting this objective is crucial to meeting the wider research objective underpinning the doctoral thesis, which is to understand the salient predictors of White vote choice for Trump. The findings from this chapter will test the robustness of the "changing America" thesis as an explanatory context for understanding White vote choice for Trump.

Importantly, the findings will also be comparable to those of the preceding two chapters because of the standardized coefficients and similar baseline covariates controlled for in regression. In the upcoming discussion chapter, this will allow us to assess the comparative salience of the "changing America" thesis relative to explanations grounded in short-term economic anxiety and longer-term trends in downward economic mobility (left behind thesis), and the salience of dominant-group identities and non-White racial prejudice (cultural decline thesis) examined in the previous chapters 4 and 5 (respectively) of this doctoral thesis. Therefore, to meet the specific objective of this chapter, and the broader objective underpinning the thesis, this chapter asks the following questions:

How did diversity affect White Americans' in relation to their levels of participation in the 2016 election?

i) Does diversity cause Whites to "hunker down" (Putnam, 2007) and withdraw from aspects of public and civic life – especially from formal forms of electoral participation such as voting?

ii) Or, might Whites' attitudes towards the threat of increasing ethnoracial diversity mobilise them to vote for a radical political actor such as Trump?

The chapter begins with a contextual section that outlines how America's demographics have changed since the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, which ended historical quotas on immigration from outside Western and Northern Europe. Next, the chapter tracks the decline of community in the US, which is claimed by key American social capital theorists such as Putnam (2000) to have started in the early 1970s. To bridge the link between increasing ethno-racial diversity and crumbling social capital, the chapter then unpacks Putnam's (2007) "hunkering down" thesis. I also explore the relationship between lower levels of social capital and Whites' contact with diversity using a subset of non-Hispanic Whites from the most recent wave of the General Social Survey (GSS). I then assess the robustness of the "voice route" hypothesis by seeing if Whites threatened by diversity were predicted to vote for Trump. I conclude by reflecting on the significance of the findings and lay the groundwork for the comparison of the robustness of the "changing America" thesis to the other two explanatory contexts earlier assessed in the upcoming discussion chapter.

America's Changing Demographics

In order to begin to understand how diversity affects White Americans today, it is useful to consider how America's demographics have changed over the last few decades. For much of its history, America was a predominately biracial nation. At turn of the Nineteenth Century, America was almost exclusively composed of Whites of primarily Western and European origin/ancestry, as well as African Americans. In 1900, these two racial groups composed 99% of the total US population, with non-Hispanic Whites composing 87%, and African Americans composing 12%, respectively (US Census Bureau/IPUMS USA).

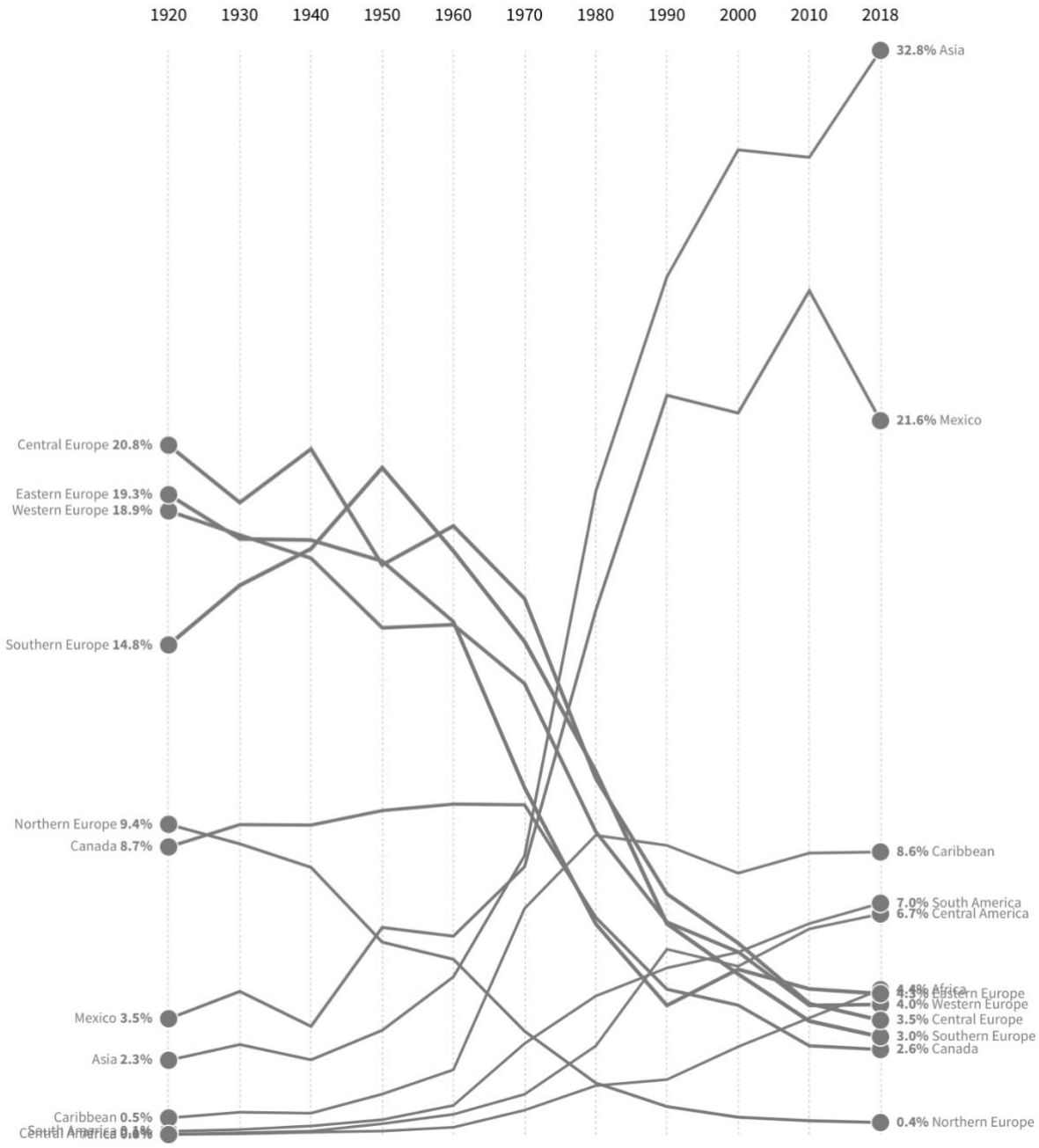
Large influxes of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe during the last major waves of European immigration to the United States between the 1890s and 1917 were perceived by nativists and immigration restrictionists as a "threat" to the purity of White

"Nordic" or "Anglo Saxon" stock (Higham, 2002, p. 277). Nativist concerns fed into national immigration policymaking at the end of the last major wave of immigration. In 1924, members of Congress proposed the Johnson-Reed Act, whose provisions effectively banned all immigration from the Asian continent, and enacted strict quotas on immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe. The Johnson-Reed Act had a dual purpose in that it both restricted immigration from non-Western and Northern and European countries and drew a tight formulation of American citizenship to "preserve" the idea of US ethnic homogeneity. As scholars have noted, this construction of American citizenship was one that was essentially White (Ngai, 2005, p. 25; Jardina, 2019, p. 155).[65] The Johnson-Reed Act had the effect of limiting non-White immigration to the United States for the next four decades. Resultingly, many of the those that did migrate to the US during this time were from Western and Northern Europe, as well as Canada.

The most significant divergence from the Immigration Act of 1924 came with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. The 1965 law abolished the quota systems of the Johnson-Reed Act in favour of a more liberal immigration policy. Removing restrictions on immigration from Asia and non- Europeans states significantly altered the immigration demographics of the United States. To better illustrate this effect, **Figure 6.1** is a slope graph that depicts the top birthplaces of America's foreign-born population at each Census year beginning in 1920. In 1920, 86% of all foreign-born persons in the United States were from either Canada or Europe.

[65] Congressmen in favour of the Johnson-Reed Act spoke with candour about the fact that the underlying purpose of the bill was to preserve an essentially White conceptualisation of American citizenship. For instance, Senator Ellison DuRant of South Carolina, a nativist influenced by the works of thinkers such as Madison Grant, spoke on the floor of the Senate asking his colleagues to "shut the door" on immigration to the US (Smith, 1924).

Figure 6.1: Birthplaces of America's Foreign-Born Population, 1920-2018



Notes: So that the longitudinal dataset was small enough to be computational for machine learning, full Census counts (where available) were not selected. Instead, the following samples were selected for the specified census/intercensal years: 1920 (1%); 1930 (1%); 1940 (1%); 1950 (1%); 1960 (1%); 1970 (1%); 1980 (5%); 1990 (5%); 2000 (ACS); 2010 (ACS); 2018 (ACS). Sample limited to cases where individuals were not born in any of the 50 states or Washington D.C. N = 3,216,276.

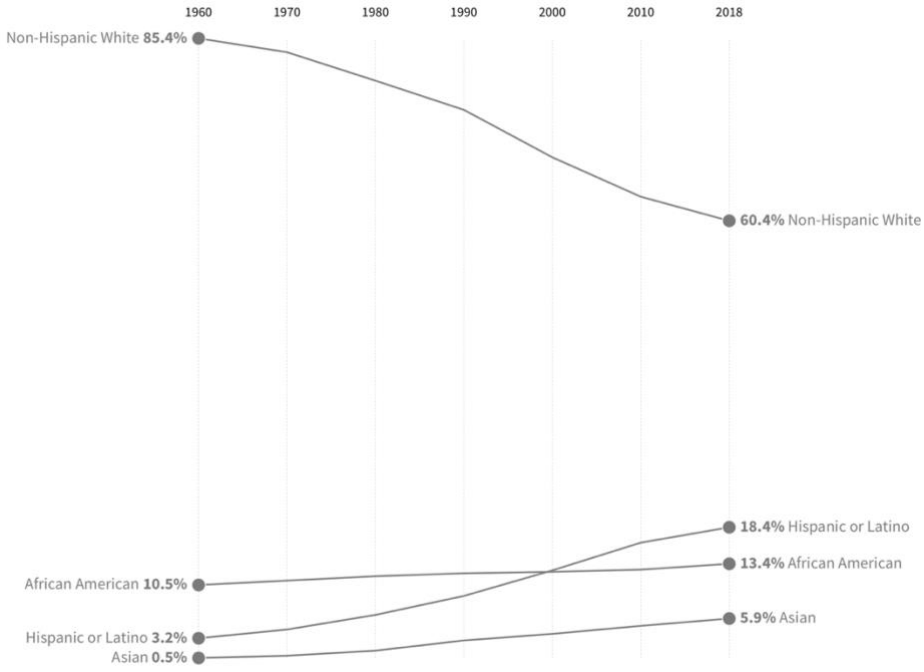
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey/IPUMS USA University of Minnesota

As **Figure 6.1** indicates, the foreign-born population of the United States between 1920 and 1970 was largely composed of immigrants from these sources. Post-1970, however, we begin to see a significant uptick in the percentage of foreign-born persons from Mexico, Asia, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. The demarcation point at which European and Canadian immigrants no longer constituted a majority of the foreign-born population according to **Figure 6.1** was 1980.

Whether intentional or unintentional,[66] the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act profoundly changed the demographics of the United States. The first effect of the 1965 Act was to dramatically increase the foreign-born population. Foreign-born persons constituted 5 percent of the US population in 1965 - a number which swelled to 14 percent in 2016 (Pew Research Center, 2015). The second effect of the 1965 Act was to alter the ethnic and racial demographics of the US. Between 1965 and 2015, Pew found that post-1965 immigrants, as well as their children, accounted for 55 percent of overall population growth. Post-1965 immigrants and second-generation immigrants added 72 million people to America's population growth as the nation grew from 193 million people in 1965 to 324 million by 2015 (Pew Research Center, 2015). It is this growth in particular that has made America less non-Hispanic White and more ethno-racially diverse. This is because, and as demonstrated by **Figure 6.1**, post-1970 immigrants to the United States have come from predominately non-White nations and regions.

[66] At the time of the bill's passage through Congress, US Senators such as Ted Kennedy were adamant that the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act would not alter the ethnic and racial demographics of the US (Chin, 2015, p. 49). However, other scholars and commentators have seen the 1965 Act as more nefarious in that it represented a deliberate attempt to alter the demographics of the US (Brimelow, 1995; Coulter, 2015; Carlson, 2018).

Figure 6.2: The Ethnoracial Demography of the United States, 1960-2018



Source: US Census Bureau/American Community Survey

Figure 6.2 depicts how America's ethnoracial demographics are changing over time as a consequence of increased non-White immigration and higher birth rates among non-Whites. Just before the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, the 1960 Census data indicate that non-Hispanic Whites composed 85.4 percent of the US population. Over time, this number begins to decrease. Importantly, the decline in the non-Hispanic White population between 1960 and 2018 is not primarily driven by an increase in the African American population, which increases by just 2.9 percent between these timepoints. Rather, it is driven by increases in the Hispanic/Latino and Asian populations; the Hispanic population increased from 3.2 percent in 1960 to 18.4 percent in 2018 - an increase of 15.2 percent. Meanwhile, the Asian population increased from 0.5 percent in 1960 to 5.9 percent in 2018 - an increase of 5.4 percent.

The Decline of Social Capital

The previous section provided a brief explanatory context outlining how post-1965 immigration has changed the ethnic and racial demographics of the US. As ethnoracial heterogeneity has increased in subsequent decades, numerous scholars have noted a precipitous decline in social capital and a weakening of the bonds of community (Putnam, 1995; Rahn & Transue, 1998; 2000; Paxton, 1999). In this short section, I track post-1972 trends in the decline of social capital using a subset of non-Hispanic Whites from the GSS. I also consider reasons for the decline in social capital. Bridging an important link between increasing diversity and crumbling social capital, I unpack Putnam's (2007) "hunker down" thesis. I note how Putnam's (2007) thesis is important in the diversity/social capital literature because it posits that diversity causes Whites to withdraw from community life and reduces their estimations of trustworthiness.

For parsimony, I track trends not related to the specific set of activities that make up social capital, but rather the essential function that is needed for social capital itself. This essential function is social trust (Putnam 2000). By social trust I am not referring to specific trust in one's neighbours or work management. Rather, I am referring to the general expectation that others will do the right thing. Social trust is the bedrock of social capital. It is difficult to 'think of any form of social capital that would exist without trust', notes Murray (2010: 251). Scholars in the study of community health frame the notion of trust through the idea of reciprocity (Newton 2001; Subramanian et al. 2002; Lochner et al.,2003). For Putnam (2007), reciprocity is the expectation that others will 'immediately' and 'perhaps without even knowing you' provide a favour in the confidence that it will someday be returned (134). If social trust erodes, therefore, we expect social capital to begin to erode, too.

Since the inception of the GSS in 1972, the survey has asked three questions that seek to gauge the robustness of the socialised norms of Americans:

1. Generally speaking, would you say that people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?
2. Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?
3. Do you think that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?

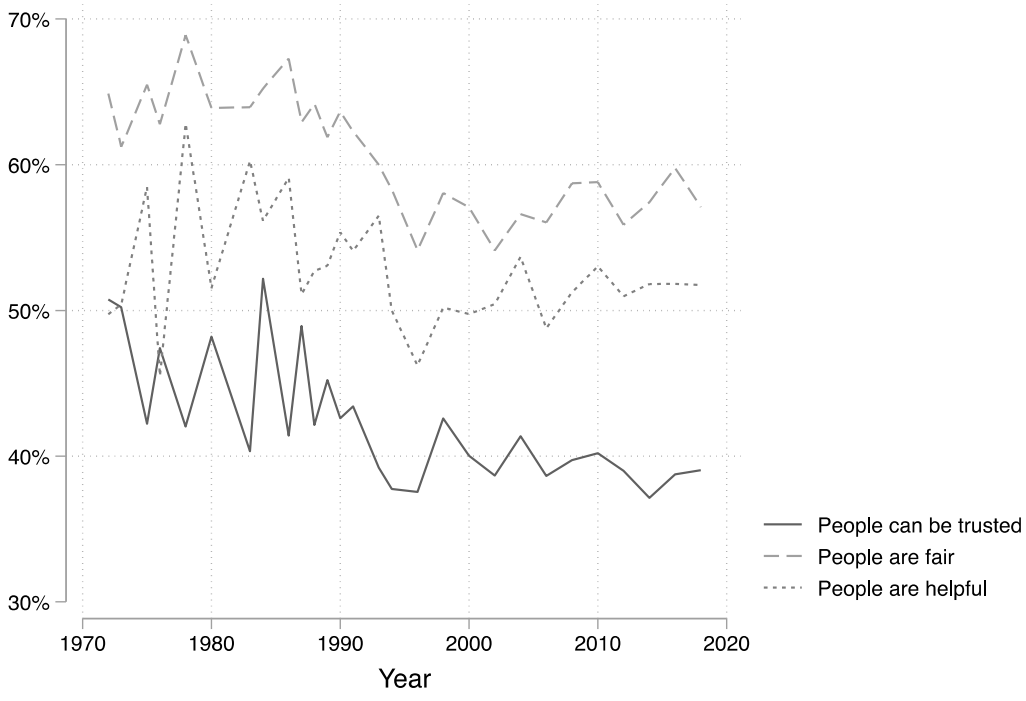
Source: GSS Codebook (2019)

Figure 6.3 graphs trends in the socialised norms of White Americans beginning with the inception of the GSS in 1972 and ending with the most recent wave in 2018. Before I unpack these trends, it is important to note that Putnam demonstrates that social trust began to decline prior to the inception of the GSS in 1972 (2000, p. 142). However, a limitation of Putnam's dataset is that the data are not parsed by race and/or ethnicity. As such, we cannot know how that decline affected White Americans in particular. Elucidation of these tends is thus important because it allows us to gauge how the socialized norms of Whites have changed over time. White Americans' levels of generalised trust declined by 8 percentage points between 1972 and 2002. Trust continued to decline in the GSS waves between 2004 and 2018, however the decline was less precipitous relative to that of the preceding three decades.

The dashed line in **Figure 6.3** concerns Whites' estimations of the fairness of others. Overall, the trends concerning fairness paint a similar picture to those of trust. Positive

estimations of the fairness of others among Whites remained high and relatively stable between the early Seventies and early Eighties. Beginning in the mid-Eighties, however, Whites' estimations of fairness began to decline markedly. While a majority of Whites (57%) still believed that others were generally fair by the 2002 wave of the GSS, this nonetheless represented a decrease of 7 percentage points relative to the high watermark of 64% of Whites who thought the same in 1984. Notwithstanding similarities to trends with trust, the data in the post-2002 waves of the GSS indicate a small uptick in the percentage of Whites who believe that others are fair. Given the weakness of this increase relative to the steep decline observed between 1978 and 2002, however, positive estimations of the fairness of others among Whites are not rebounding noticeably.

Figure 6.3: Trends in the Socialised Norms of White Americans, 1972-2018



Notes: Sample limited to White Americans (1972-1998) and non-Hispanic Whites 2000-2018.

Data source: GSS 1972-2018 Cross Sectional Cumulative Data (2019)

Lastly, the dotted line **Figure 6.3** concerns Whites' estimations of the helpfulness of others. While there is some variation in Whites' estimations of the helpfulness of others between survey waves, it is important to note that the 52 per cent of Whites who believed that others are generally altruistic in the 2018 GSS is actually 3 per cent higher than the 49 per cent of Whites who believed the same in 1972.

In sum, and with the exception of Whites' estimations of the helpfulness of others, the data presented thus far indicate an erosion of the robustness of the socialised norms of White Americans. Ever since Putnam's landmark Bowling Alone (2000) was published, scholars of the social capital literature have developed hypotheses to explain the precipitous decline in social capital. Arguably the most significant development comes from Putnam himself. After Bowling Alone, Putnam found a significant relationship between crumbling levels of social capital and increasing levels of ethnic heterogeneity. Putnam (2007) reported that ethnic diversity – at least in the short to medium turn – reduces levels of social capital. In a large-n national survey, Putnam found that Americans,[67] living in more ethnically heterogeneous communities[68] tended to "hunker down". Putnam (2007) describes hunkering down as a condition in individuals withdraw from public life who become less trusting of their neighbours. "Hunkered down" individuals, Putnam found, were less likely to carpool and considered television to be their most important form of entertainment (2007: 143).

This section has provided an overview of the trends in the decline of Whites' levels of social capital from the early 1970s to 2018. The decline of social capital has important implications for the role of community in the lives of many White Americans. In a neighbourhood with less social capital, individuals are less likely to participate in community

[67] Although, not Whites specifically.
[68] Communities are defined at the census tract level in Putnam's (2007) analysis.

and political organisations, have less social interaction, report lower levels of happiness and life satisfaction, and have lower levels of collective efficacy. The sum of such changes is that those living in communities with lower levels of social capital live more isolated lives than those in communities with higher levels of social capital. Putnam (2007) demonstrates that these conditions can be caused by increasing levels of ethnic heterogeneity in America at the community level. In the decade since Putnam's (2007) landmark study, America has become even more ethnically and racially diverse. Quantifying the relationship between low levels of social capital and Whites' contact with diversity is thus critically important if we are to understand how "hunkered down" Whites behaved electorally in 2016. The next section addresses this important lacuna.

Testing the Link Between Diversity and Social Capital

To examine the link between diversity and social capital, I again turn to the General Social Survey (GSS). If contact with diversity is indeed related to lower levels of social capital among White Americans, then we should observe a significant association between the two constructs across multiple years, and with the different measures of social capital. I begin by examining the strength of the association between the robustness of Whites' socialised norms and neighbourhood heterogeneity. To assess the strength of this association, I pool the responses of White Americans to the items of interest in my analysis. These were the three items concerning Whites' socialised norms (estimations of the trustworthiness, fairness, and helpfulness of others).[69] My variable for measuring contact with diversity is a dichotomous variable where White respondents were asked if there were any members of the opposite race living in their neighbourhood (1 = "yes"; 0 = "no"). With these items, I

[69] Of course, robust socialised norms are not the only measures of social capital. However, these three items are among the few in the GSS for which there are comparable data over time and asked at regular survey wavs.

conducted a series of Chi Square tests of association to see if low levels of social capital and neighbourhood heterogeneity were positively and significantly associated. These results are presented below in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6.1: Chi Square Tests of Association Between Social Capital Items and Neighbourhood Heterogeneity

	N	Pearson Chi Square	φ	p
Can people be trusted	30,726	24.991	.029	***
People helpful or looking after themselves	30,671	67.858	.047	***
People fair or try to take advantage	30,593	99.805	.057	***

Notes: Data are pooled estimates of cross-sectional data (1972-2018). Sample limited to White Americans (1972-1998); non-Hispanic Whites 2000-2018.

Source: GSS 1972-2018 Cross Cumulative Data (2019)

As depicted in **Table 6.1** , the tests indicated a significant association between the variable for neighbourhood heterogeneity and the three social capital items of distrust (x^2 (2) = 24.991, p <.001), lower estimations of the helpfulness of others (x^2 (2) = 67.858, p <.001), lower estimations of the fairness of others (x^2 (2) = 99.805, p <.001). A series of Fisher's exact tests indicated modestly sized-yet-significant associations between the items for Whites' socialised norms and neighbourhood heterogeneity (p <.001). These tests are consistent with Putnam's (2007) "hunker down" thesis in that neighbourhood heterogeneity is positively and significantly associated with lower estimations of the trustworthiness, fairness, and helpfulness of others. Not only do these results conform to Putnam's original hypothesis, but they also confirm the continuation of a trend observed in post-2007 studies that ethnic

diversity is increasingly eroding social trust in advanced Western democracies (Dinesen et al. 2020; Stolle et al., 2008; Gundelach and Freitag 2014).

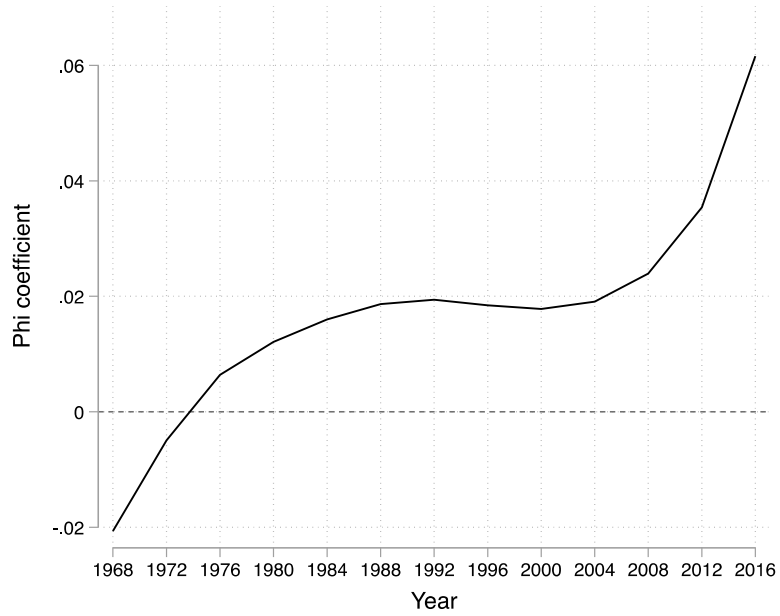
Estimations of trust might be among the most important measures of social capital, but they are not the only indices. Next, I turn to examine the link between diversity and Whites' levels of institutionally oriented political participation. Perhaps the most important indicator of such participation in advanced Western democracies is voting in elections. Presidential elections are certainly the most visible and, arguably, the most important type of election in American democracy. In areas with greater ethnic heterogeneity, Putnam reported that respondents had a frequency of registering to vote less (2007: 149). To test this hypothesis further, I examine levels of participation in Presidential elections among Whites who live in multiracial neighbourhoods. I am particularly interested in the strength of this relationship over time – i.e. whether Whites' levels of non-participation in elections have increased as neighbourhood heterogeneity has also increased. An advantage of the GSS cross-sectional file is that it contains items that ask whether respondents voted in every Presidential election since 1968, as well as measures of the racial composition of neighbourhoods. As such, I am able to plot the strength of the relationship between non-participation and neighbourhood heterogeneity across elections.

Figure 6.4 is a periodogram that depicts how the strength of the association between neighbourhood heterogeneity and non-participation in Presidential elections has changed over time. Of particular interest is the y-axis, which plots the level of the Phi coefficient (φ) representing the effect size of this association.[70] As indicated by **Figure 6.4**, neighbourhood heterogeneity was negatively associated with non-participation in Presidential elections

[70] I report the mean square contingency coefficient (or Phi) because my measures are dichotomous. My measures of electoral participation concern whether respondents voted in a given election between 1968 and 2016 (1 = "did not vote"; 0 = "voted"). The neighbourhood heterogeneity item is the same as that in **Table 6.1** (dichotomous variable for whether or not there were any members of the opposite race living in their neighbourhood where 1 = "yes"; 0 = "no").

between 1968 and 1972, implying that neighborhood heterogeneity was actually correlated with greater participation. However, the strength of this association began to increase between the late 1970s and early 1980s, such that neighborhood heterogeneity became increasingly correlated with non-participation. The association weakened between the 1992 and 2000 presidential election cycles but became stronger in the post-2000 election cycles.

Figure 6.4: The Association Between Neighbourhood Heterogeneity and Electoral Participation



Notes: Sample limited to White Americans (1968-1998); non-Hispanic Whites 2000-2016. Data smoothed using locally estimated regression (LOESS)

Data source: GSS 1968-2018 Cross Sectional Cumulative Data (2019)

The overall trend of **Figure 6.4** is such that the association between non-voting and neighbourhood heterogeneity has increased over time. This observation makes sense given how America has become more diverse since the post-1965 Fourth Wave of major

immigration to the US. As a consequence of this increasing diversity, interaction with non-Whites has become an important factor in the daily lives of many White Americans.

The evidence presented thus far concerning decreases in social trust and estimations of fairness - as well as the links between diversity and Whites' socialized norms and their non-participation in presidential elections - suggest that Whites who live in multiracial neighbourhoods may be "hunkering down". However, while some Whites respond to diversity by "hunkering down", there is also a significant body of literature which shows that Whites have increasingly reacted to this growing diversity by moving away from more diverse locales to more racially homogenous areas (Rossell 1975; Boustan 2010). In the next section, therefore, I assess whether neighbourhood heterogeneity is also positively and significantly associated with White geographic mobility.

White Flight as a Response to Increasing Diversity

The exodus of Whites from increasingly diverse areas is known as "White flight" (Kruse 2013). It is the process by which White Americans move from racially heterogenous urban and suburban areas to exurban and rural areas. The key phenomenon underpinning White flight is what sociologists call the "tipping point". In the context of White flight, the "tipping point" occurs when 'the proportion of non-whites exceeds the limits of the neighborhood's [sic] tolerance for interracial living' (Grodzins 1958: 6). This "tipping point" began in the Civil Rights era when Midwestern cities such as Cleveland, OH, and Detroit, MI experienced a marked decline in their respective White populations (Grodzins 1958). The literature shows that White flight was driven, among other things,[71] by attempts to achieve

[71] Scholars have equally questioned this account, noting that many Whites responded to integration by means of violence, intimidation, and legal tactics (Seligman 2005). Elsewhere, others argue that White flight occurred due to demographic pressures. Boustan (2007) argues that White flight occurred in response to population pressures owing to the large-scale migration of African Americans from the

integration by means of forced bussing, which had the effect of driving some White families from urban areas during the Seventies (Frey 1979; Clark 1987; Araújo 2016).

To begin to explore the second research question posed in this chapter – namely, are Whites more proactive in their response to America's increasing diversity than Putnam's (2007) thesis might seem to indicate - the thesis now turns to test the hypothesis that Whites have moved from diverse areas because of their opposition to living in diverse neighbourhoods. The contemporary White flight literature tends to look at the phenomena of White flight at the spatial level using Census data (Pais et al. 2009; Kye 2018). Such analyses are adept at observing the phenomena of White flight as a function of neighbourhood heterogeneity. However, an important limitation of the Census data is that we are unable to gauge whether White geographic mobility operates as a function of Whites' opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood.[72] To address this important lacuna, I turn to the GSS. For my dependent variable, the GSS contains an item asking respondents whether they have lived in the same place since they were 16.[73] My key explanatory variables include the item concerning whether a respondent lives in a heterogeneous neighbourhood, and a measure which asks respondents whether they favour/oppose living in a neighbourhood which is half African American.

In order to determine if White geographic mobility is indeed related to opposition to neighbourhood heterogeneity, de minims, I account for several potentially competing factors in my mobility model.[74] Mobility behaviour is often dependent on economic and employment

South to the Midwest. In addition, the influx of post-1965 immigrants who came to America during the Fourth Wave of migration also contributed to these demographic changes (Frey & Liaw, 1998).

[72] Even in studies where individual level data are used, the important relationship between opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood (vis-a-vis the racial composition of respondent neighbourhoods themselves) and geographic mobility is not explored (Crowder, 2000; Crowder & South, 2008).

[73] The three categories are: 1 = "same city"; 2 = "different city, same state"; 3 = "different state".

[74] While it is hypothesized that party ID might also affect mobility behaviour, I do not control for party ID in my mobility model since scholars have previously found mixed results (Cho et al. 2013).

factors (Saben 1964; Ladinsky 1967; Schlottmann and Herzog 1981). Accordingly, I include controls for respondents' subjective evaluations of changes to their personal finances, labour-force status (participant or non-participant), and occupational prestige. In addition to these economic/labour force characteristics, I also control for demographic characteristics known to influence geographic mobility. These include gender (Shauman and Xie 1996), age (De Jong et al. 1995), subjective evaluations of health (Longino et al. 1991; Curtis et al. 2009), marital status (Davanzo 1976), education (Rosenfeld and Jones 1987), homeownership, and income. Lastly, I include a measure concerning respondents' subjective evaluations of neighbourhood safety.

GSS data for the years 1972 to 2018, **Table 6.2** provides the results of a multinomial probit (MNP) model where the categories of White geographic mobility are regressed against the two items concerning neighbourhood heterogeneity and the controls just described. Among Whites who reported moving to a different city but residing in the same state, neighbourhood heterogeneity is positively related to White geographic mobility, however the effect is not statistically significant (p = .115). Whites' opposition to living in a heterogeneous neighbourhood is, likewise, weakly correlated with mobility behaviour, and the effect does not begin to approach accepted levels of significance. However, this pattern of insignificance begins to change when it comes to Whites who have moved states. Among Whites who reported moving states in the GSS, neighbourhood heterogeneity is strongly and significantly associated with geographic mobility (β = .395, p <.001). The effect for opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood is also marginally stronger among Whites who have moved states than it is for Whites who have not moved states. However, the effect is an insignificant predictor of mobility behaviour across state lines.

Table 6.2 Determinants of White Geographic Mobility, 1972-2018

	Different City, Same State	Different State
Heterogeneous neighbourhood	.122	.395***
	(.077)	(.080)
Opposes living in heterogeneous neighbourhood	-.008	-.002
	(.037)	(.038)
Labour-force participant	.085	-.080
	(.084)	(.083)
Occupational prestige	-.000	-.000
	(.000)	(.000)
Change in financial situation	-.026	.003
	(.049)	(.050)
Education	.256***	.436***
	(.037)	(.036)
Income	-.052**	-.068**
	(.019)	(.020)
Homeowner	-.012	-.008
	(.037)	(.036)
Age	-008**	-016***
	(.002)	(.002)
Subjective evaluation of health	.058	-.040
	(.047)	(.049)
Married	.294***	.397***
	(.076)	(.077)
Female	.080	-.036
	(.079)	(.079)
Afraid to walk alone at night in neighbourhood	.054	.059
	(.082)	(.084)
Constant	-1.076**	-1.560***
	(.410)	(.424)
Region FEs	Yes	
Year FEs	Yes	
Pseudo R^2	.035	
N	5,780	

Notes: Table entries are coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parenthesis. Dependent variable is respondent geographic mobility since age 16 (reference category = 1 "same city"). Estimates are from a pooled cross-sectional sample of White Americans (1972-1998) and non-Hispanic White Americans (2000-2018). Model controls region and year FEs. Data are weighted. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001

Source: GSS 1972-2018 Cross Sectional Cumulative Data (2019)

While **Table 6.2** indicates a positive relationship between living in a heterogeneous neighborhood and moving to a different state (p <.001), we must interpret the results of the mobility model with a great deal of care. This is because of the insignificant effect of neighborhood heterogeneity on the probability of a White individual moving to different city

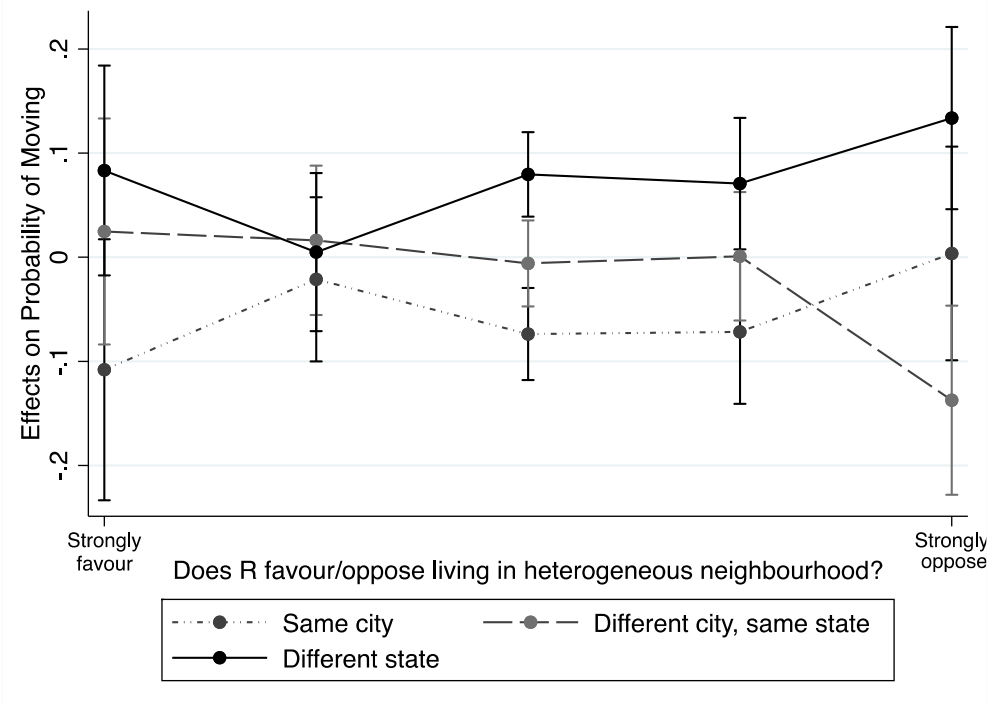
but within the same state. Since the relationship between neighborhood heterogeneity and White geographic mobility differs for inter-city and inter-state migration, we cannot read the results of the model as conclusive proof of White flight. Indeed, if neighborhood heterogeneity is conducive of White flight, then we would have expected the neighborhood heterogeneity item to be a significant predictor of multiple types of mobility. Furthermore, given what we know about patterns of White migration,[75] it is difficult to quantify why neighborhood heterogeneity would impact interstate migration but not other types of mobility – for instance intercity migration. However, these results are consistent with geographic mobility scholarship which finds that race is somewhat predictive of patterns of interstate migration but not local migration patterns (Frey and Liaw 1998). In sum, though some significance is observed through the neighborhood heterogeneity item on the dependent measure is observed, this cannot be taken as conclusive proof that diversity causes White flight.

Given this mixed set of results from **Table 6.2**, I assess whether neighbourhood heterogeneity is indeed an important moderator of Whites' opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood. Specifically, I assess whether mobility behaviour is more strongly associated with opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood among Whites who actually live in more racially heterogeneous neighbourhoods. To determine if this relationship can be observed, I again turn to the GSS. I want to know if the effect of opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood on mobility behaviour is more powerful among Whites who live in a heterogeneous community. I would expect the effect of neighbourhood heterogeneity on mobility behaviour to become more salient as the levels of opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood increase. To test this further, I re-estimate the MNL model, but add an

[75] For instance, Kruse (2013) demonstrates that Whites moved from metropolitan Atlanta to proximate suburbs and exurbs as a response to increasing diversity.

interaction term between the two items concerning neighbourhood heterogeneity. After re-estimating the model, I then used postestimation to assess the nature of the interaction between neighbourhood heterogeneity and Whites' opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood. The results of the postestimation are presented in **Figure 6.5**.

Figure 6.5: The Marginal Effect of Neighbourhood Heterogeneity on the Probability of Being Geographically Mobile by Opinion to Living in a Diverse Neighbourhood



Notes: Estimates of marginal effects based on results of the multinomial probit model in **Table 6.2**. Interaction term added between the neighbourhood heterogeneity item and the item concerning Whites' opposition to living in a diverse neighbourhood. All covariates in MLT model set to their respective means. Estimates are from a pooled cross-sectional sample of White Americans (1972-1998) and non-Hispanic White Americans (2000-2018). Data are weighted.

Source: GSS 1972-2018 Cross Sectional Cumulative Data (2019)

Figure 6.5 graphs the marginal effects of neighbourhood heterogeneity on the probability that a White American will be geographically mobile by each category of opinion concerning whether Whites favour/oppose living in a diverse neighbourhood. This graph

indeed reveals an important interactive relationship between the key variables. The interaction is such that, as opposition to neighbourhood heterogeneity increases, neighbourhood heterogeneity is associated with a greater probability that a White will be more geographically mobile. Importantly, this relationship is strongest among Whites who have moved the farthest geographically, with the marginal effect being the largest for Whites who have moved to a different state.

In this section, I have attempted to show that Whites are exiting increasingly diverse locales because of their opposition to living in multiracial neighbourhoods. While I found evidence that neighborhood heterogeneity impacts interstate migration among Whites, it is important to qualify that I found limited evidence that neighborhood heterogeneity impacts inter-city migration within the same state. Given this mixed pattern of results, it cannot be definitively proven that neighborhood heterogeneity impacts all types of White geographic mobility. What then, are the implications of moving away from racially heterogeneous communities for Whites' levels of social capital? This is an important consideration because racially and ethnically homogenous communities consistently experience better outcomes for various measures of community life (Costa & Kahn, 2003). Importantly, among these outcomes are higher rates of civic engagement and participation. In the next section, therefore, I explore how community homogeneity fosters better social capital outcomes for White Americans whose households are geographically distant from more diverse locales.

Social Capital and Community Homogeneity

In the last section, I found some evidence that neighbourhood heterogeneity and Whites' opposition to living in diverse neighbourhoods is associated with an increased probability that Whites will be geographically mobile. Though, it is important to qualify that this significant relationship was limited to interstate migration. We know that, as a

consequence of White flight, Whites are moving to predominately exurban and rural areas; what characterises these areas is that they are overwhelmingly White. I have also shown how community heterogeneity fosters lower levels of social capital and leads Whites to "hunker down", as Putnam (2007) puts it. In this section, I am interested in testing the reverse of Putnam's (2007) thesis as it applies to Whites living in overwhelmingly White communities. That is, I am interested in whether community homogeneity fosters greater levels of social capital and, by extension, greater participation. If Whites in increasingly diverse locales hunker down and report lower levels of social capital, I expect the inverse to be the case for Whites who live in more homogenous neighbourhoods.

To test my hypothesis, I turn to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of around 60,000 US households compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). While primarily a survey to gauge trends in employment, the CPS often includes supplemental topics. Importantly, several of these CPS Supplements measure dimensions of social capital, including volunteerism, civic engagement, and rates of voting. I selected a subsample of non-Hispanic White Americans over the age of 18 for my analysis. To measure volunteerism in homogenous communities, I turn to the 2015 Volunteer Supplement. To measure civic engagement, I turn to the 2017 Civic Engagement Supplement. And to measure rates of voting, I turn to the 2016 Voter Supplement. All surveys contained common sociodemographic variables which I included in the construction of my dataset via the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).

I draw my key dependent variables from these respective CPS Supplements. My key explanatory variable is a measure of household proximity to a metropolitan area, which I use as a proximate variable to measure community homogeneity. Metropolitan status is a robust proximate measure of community homogeneity. The 2012-2016 ACS estimates show that urban areas are becoming increasingly diverse, with only 44 per cent of the population of

urban areas reported as non-Hispanic White (Pew Research Center, 2018). Conversely, non-metropolitan areas are overwhelmingly White (Frey, 2017).

With these variables, I estimated a series of probit models controlling for sociodemographic and regional characteristics. After running the regressions, I then used postestimation to estimate the probability that Whites will have the propensity to volunteer/be civically engaged by the proximity of their household to a metropolitan area. I graph the marginal effects of household proximity to a metropolitan area on the probability that Whites will volunteer/be civically engaged/vote in **Figures 6.6-8**. Before I unpack the results, it is important to note that I have coded the variable for metropolitan status so that a higher value equates to a household being closer to proximity to a metro area. If community homogeneity fosters greater social capital, therefore, I would expect that the probability that a White will volunteer/be civically engaged/will vote to be the highest among Whites who live in non-metro areas, since these areas are more racially homogenous.[76] And the trend of the marginal effect will be such that the probability of volunteering/being civically engaged/voting will decrease as metro area proximity increases.

In **Figure 6.6**, I graph the marginal effects of household proximity to a metropolitan area on the probability that Whites will volunteer. As the top left panel in **Figure 6.6** indicates, the probability that White living in a non-Metropolitan area will volunteer is around two points greater than that of a White living in a Metropolitan core. The effect of household proximity to a metro area is even stronger when it comes to Whites' attendance at public meetings. The predicted probability that a White American who lives in a non-metro area will attend a public meeting is 23 points higher than that of a White who lives in a

[76] Metropolitan status is a robust proximate measure of community homogeneity. The 2012-2016 ACS estimates indicate that urban areas are becoming increasingly diverse, with only 44 per cent of the population of urban areas reported as non-Hispanic White (Pew Research Center, 2018). Conversely, non-metropolitan areas are overwhelmingly White (Frey, 2017).

central city. This trend persists for neighbourhood volunteerism, too. As indicated by the bottom left panel in **Figure 6.6**, the probability of a White living in a non-metropolitan area working with people in their neighbourhood is 16 points higher than that of a White living in a metropolitan core. Lastly, the bottom right panel concerns the propensity of Whites to donate to charity. The results show that the predicted probability of a White donating to charity is higher among those who actually live in closer proximity to metro areas. The probability that a White who lives in a central city will donate to charity is 3 points higher than that for a White American who lives outside of a metro area. This finding is important because it lends weight to the hypothesis that Whites who live in more racially homogenous communities will exhibit higher levels of social capital across a variety of measures.

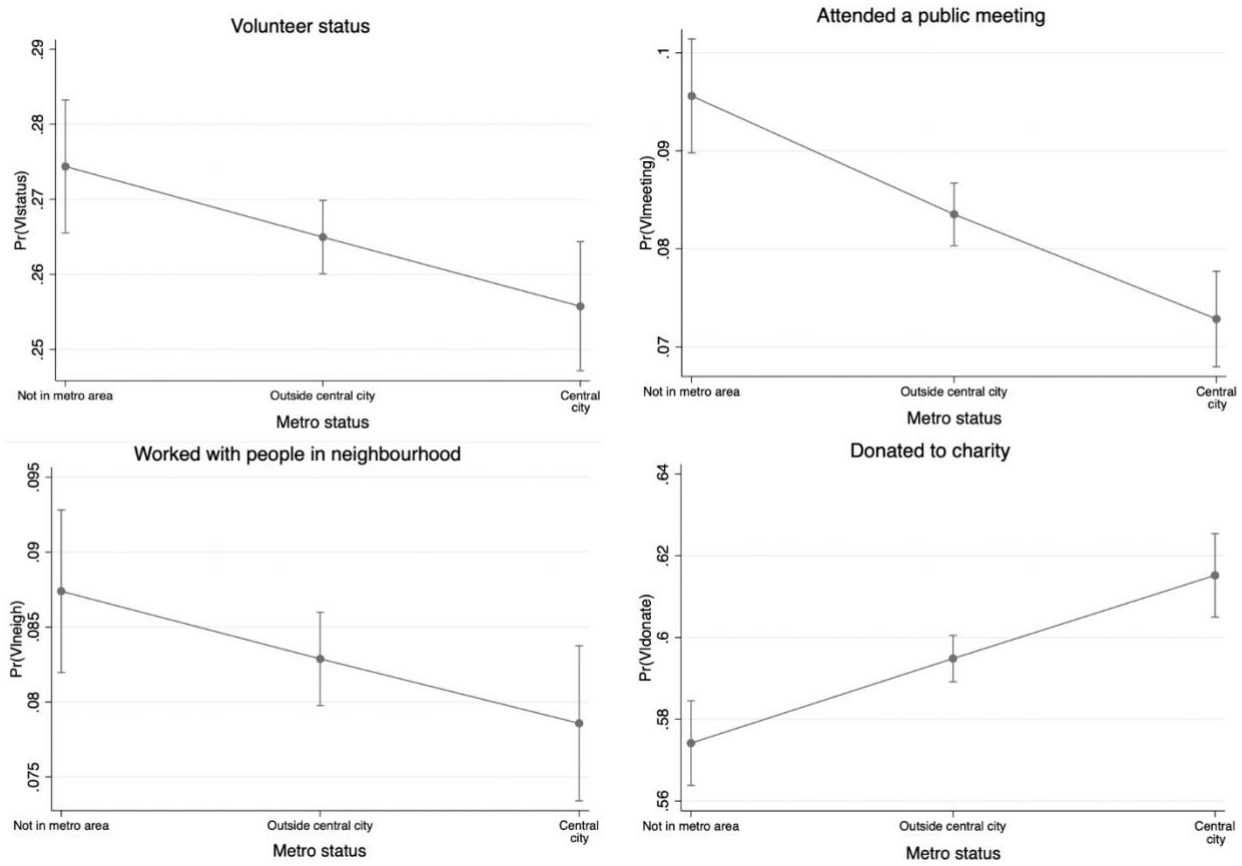
The results for Whites' levels of civic engagement are presented in **Figure 6.7**. The top panel in **Figure 6.7** concerns whether White Americans boycotted a company or product based on their political or social values. Whites who live in non-metro areas have a .86 predicted probability of boycotting based on their personal values. The marginal effect of metro area proximity on the probability of boycotting a company or product is 4 points lower for those Whites who live in central cities. As indicated by the bottom panel in **Figure 6.7**, Whites who live in non-metropolitan areas also have a .86 predicted probability of contacting a public official. And moving from being least proximate to a metro area to most proximate is associated with a 4-point decrease in the propensity of contacting a public official.

Finally, the results for the relationship between household proximity to a metro area and Whites' propensity to be electorally engaged are presented in **Figure 6.8**. The top panel in **Figure 6.8** concerns whether Whites over the age of 18 were registered to vote in the 2016 election. Whites who live outside of metro areas had a .81 predicted probability of being registered to vote in 2016 and moving from least proximate to most proximate to a metropolitan area was associated with a 6-point decline in the probability of being a

registered voter. This trend continues when it comes to the probability of a White American having voted in the 2016 election, too. The bottom panel in **Figure 6.8** shows that Whites who live outside of metropolitan areas had a .68 probability of having voted in 2016. The probability of having voted in 2016 decreases as the households of Whites respondents in the CPS become more proximate to a metropolitan area. The marginal effect is such that a White living in a metropolitan area is four points less likely to have voted in 2016 than a White living in a non-metro area.

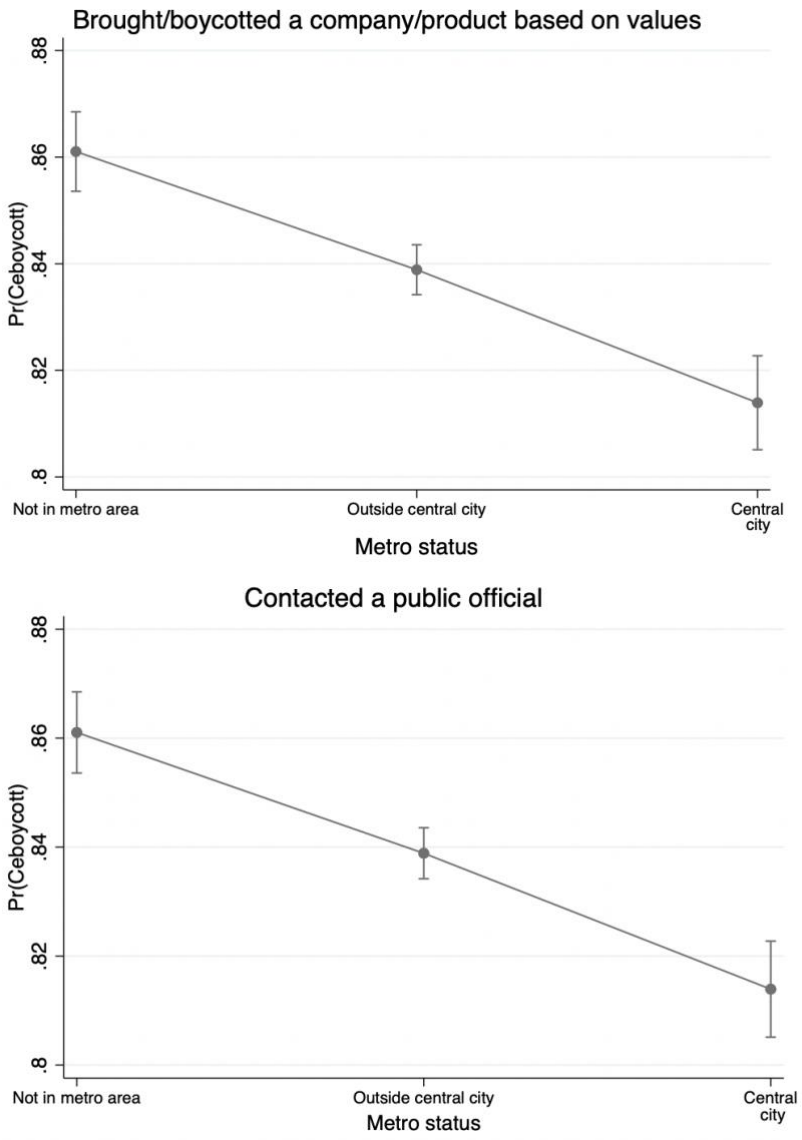
Overall, these sets of results paint a portrait of impressive consistency. When it comes to volunteerism, Whites who live in non-metropolitan areas have a higher probability of volunteering, attending public meetings, and working with people in their own neighbourhoods. The same goes for levels of civic engagement among Whites who in live in non-metropolitan areas. Whites who live in these areas have a higher probability of boycotting a company or product based on their own social or political values and are also more likely to contact a public official. Whites who live in non-metropolitan areas also have a higher probability of being registered to vote in the most recent Presidential election and having actually voted in 2016. An analysis of the Census data thus points to higher levels of social capital (in respect to volunteerism, civic engagement, and voting) for Whites who live outside of metropolitan areas.

Figure 6.6: Marginal Effects of Household Proximity to Metro Area in Volunteerism Models



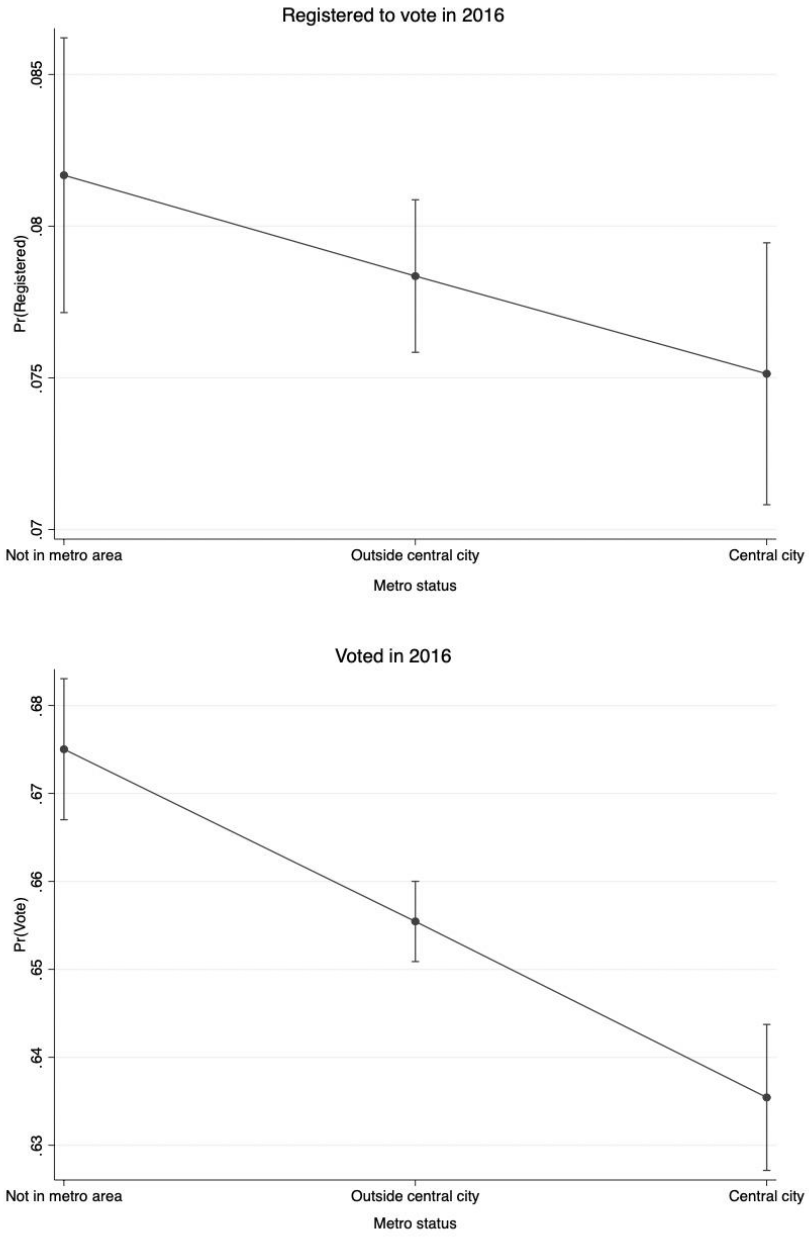
Source: 2015 CPS Volunteer Supplement/IPUMS University of Minnesota (2020)

Figure 6.7: Marginal Effects of Household Proximity to Metro Area in Civic Engagement Models



Source: 2017 CPS Civic Engagement Supplement/IPUMS University of Minnesota (2020)

Figure 6.8: Marginal Effects of Household Proximity to Metro Area in Voter Models



Notes: All probit models control for region, gender, age, marital status, number of own children in household, homeownership status, education, income, and labour force status. All covariates are set to their respective means. Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans aged 18 or over. Data are weighted. Vertical lines represent 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Source: 2016 CPS Voter Supplement/IPUMS University of Minnesota

The only measure to buck the trend was for levels of charitable giving. Some studies have shown that intergroup contact fosters lower levels of charitable giving (Amankwaa & Delvin, 2017). Parsing into levels of charitable giving by race, however it seems that the effect of ethnic diversity decreasing philanthropic behaviours is driven by low levels of charitable giving by minority groups themselves (Andreoni et al., 2016). This observation might explain why levels of charitable giving are lower overall in metro areas. For further research on levels of giving by race see (Mesch et al., 2006).

These results are important as they begin to clarify how contact with diversity feeds into Whites' levels of civic engagement/participation and their electoral behaviour. Consistent with Putnam's (2007) "hunker down" thesis, contact with diversity leads Whites to become less civically engaged.[77] While Putnam's theory applies to Whites who live in more diverse geographic locales, however, the phenomenon of White flight means that many Whites have exited diversity locally to live in more homogenous (i.e. overwhelmingly White communities). For this particular group of Whites, then, it is not the case that contact with diversity negatively affects their levels of civic engagement. Whites in more homogenous neighbourhoods will have less contact with diversity simply because the fact that they are living in a community which is 90 per cent non-Hispanic White.[78] The literature consistently shows that community homogeneity fosters greater levels of social capital (Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2010), and my analysis of the data here reflect this. As such, Trump's victory in 2016

[77] Nonetheless, there are competing explanations beyond diversity that might lead Whites in metro areas to become less civically engaged. When it comes to voting, for example, one reason that White turnout might be lower in metro areas is that Republican partisans feel as though their vote counts less in more diverse areas.

[78] Despite high rates of racial homogeneity in rural areas, it is important to note that rural America is also becoming more ethnoracially diverse, and that this diversity is largely driven by influxes of Hispanic immigrants (Lichter 2012). This observation is important because recent work suggests that predominately White areas which experienced large increases in Hispanic immigration were more likely to exhibit anti-immigrant attitudes (Newman 2013). This work is also consistent with studies of the "halo effect" on populist voting, which suggests that proximity to diversity in exurban areas may also predict voting for populist parties (Rydgren and Ruth 2013; Newman et al. 2018).

cannot be understood by Whites' contact with diversity. As such, if diversity does matter in the context of understanding Trump's victory in 2016, then for Whites in overwhelmingly White communities, perhaps it has more to do with their perceptions of diversity vis-a-vis contact with diversity as a consequence of living in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood.

In the next section, therefore, I examine how perceptions of diversity affects Whites' political behaviour. Many Whites increasingly see diversity as a threat to their group status (Major et al., 2018; Mutz, 2018). Scholars such as Mutz (2018) have tended to focus on the nature of group threat in the context of the perceived threat that racial and ethnic minorities and forces such as globalisation pose to Whites' dominant group status. Here, however, I am specifically interested in the relationship between the threat posed by demographic change, most notably the impending realisation that Whites will no longer constitute a majority of the US population by 2042.

To test this relationship, I first probe the sources of majority-minority threat. Consistent with the literature (Craig & Richeson, 2014), I hypothesise that exposure to information from news sources that have a proclivity to promote conspiracies concerning the impact of demographic change on Whites' majority status has led to the radicalisation of Whites' perspectives concerning diversity. Next, I hypothesise that these attitudes also feed into Whites' political behaviour. Specifically, I expect that Whites will be distrustful of politicians for their failure to reduce immigration coming from non-White countries. In turn, this will foster lower levels of efficacy in mainstream politics. Consequently, Whites will increasingly turn away from mainstream politics and support radical movements and actors whose culturally conservative platforms appeal to Whites who are most threatened by the prospect of demographic change. Lastly, I test the relationship between majority-minority threat and vote choice for Trump. I expect that Whites with salient levels of majority-

minority threat will have a high probability of voting for Trump, and that the construct will be independent of other predictors such as conservative ideology.

The Radicalisation of Whites' Perspectives

In this section I analyse the sources of group status threat. I hypothesise that exposure to information regarding demographic change from certain sources of news has led to the radicalisation of Whites' perspectives. To assess this hypothesis, I assess the relationship between news consumption and majority-minority threat. Specifically, I am interested in whether the relationship between news consumption and majority-minority threat is strongest among Whites whose principal information sources have a proclivity for promoting conspiracies, or endorsing narratives centred around the impact of majority-minority demographic change.

Media sources in advanced industrial societies are adept at portraying putative outsiders and minorities as a homogenous collective who are perceived as threatening to the interests of the nation (Innes 2010; Esses et al., 2013; Lawlor and Tolley, 2017). These media narratives feed into the attitudes of viewers across a variety of contexts, affecting levels of sympathy towards minority groups (Sowards and Pineda 2013), and driving anti-immigration attitudes (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007; Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes, 2014; Kosho, 2016). Similar to the ways in which these narratives influence dominant majority attitudes towards minorities, I also seek to explore the link between exposure to information and the radicalisation of Whites' perspectives concerning the impact of demographic change. More specifically, I hypothesize that the strength of the relationship between news consumption and majority-minority threat[79] will be stronger among Whites whose primary source of news

[79] The majority-minority threat index combined four items in which respondents were presented with information concerning future demographic change. Possible responses ranged from 1 = "strongly agree" to 4 = "strongly disagree." After being presented with this information, respondents were then

is from television networks such as Fox. Conversely, I hypothesise the inverse to be true for Whites whose primary source of news is from networks such as CNN.[8081]

To test this hypothesis, I draw on a series of items from the 2016 Voter Survey in which respondents were asked which news network was their primary source of information across a range of different news/talk show formats. With these items, I then estimated a series of multiple regression models with majority-minority change as the dependent variable. Because the sources of news which Americans consume have become increasingly correlated with their ideological leanings over time (Iyengar and Hahn 2009), I also control for the effect of respondents' partisanship and ideology in regression. **Figure 6.9** graphs the predicted margins of the interaction between Whites' contrasting sources of news against the strength of the linear prediction for majority-minority ethnic threat. If my hypothesis holds true, then we would expect to see higher predictive margins for Whites who reported that Fox was their primary source of news information vis-a-vis CNN.

Figure 6.9 indicates that the strongest relationships between news consumption and majority-minority ethnic threat are among Whites who watch the daily talk shows on Fox. The relationship between Whites' consumption of daily talk shows and the threat of majority-minority demographic change is stronger among White respondents who specifically reported watching Hannity on Fox rather than Anderson Cooper on CNN. The threat of demographic

asked whether they agreed with a series of statements concerning the consequences of greater ethnoracial diversity. The first statement was "Americans will learn more from one another and be enriched by exposure to many different cultures." The second statement was "a bigger, more diverse workforce will lead to more economic growth." The third statement was "there will be too many demands on public services" (reverse coded). And the fourth statement was "there will not be enough jobs for everybody" (reverse coded). The index ranges from 4 to 16 with a Cronbach's α = .78.

[80] Such that the relationship between news consumption and majority-minority threat is weaker.

[81] I chose CNN and Fox as the principal television networks in my models because of the contrasting ways in which these networks disseminate and convey information about demographic change. Of course, the manner in which these outlets frame information about such changes are largely congruous with the broader ideological composition of their respective audiences. On the one hand, CNN's audience is consistently more liberal. Conversely, the audience of Fox is largely conservative (Pew Research Center, 2013).

change is strongly associated with Whites' exclusive consumption of Hannity in the daily talk show slot. Conversely, Whites who watch Anderson Cooper on CNN have a somewhat looser relationship with majority-minority threat than a White Hannity viewer.

The significant relationship between Whites' exposure to daily talk shows on Fox and the perception of threat caused by demographic change is especially important.[82] Networks such as Fox are increasingly described as aligned to the concept and narrative of conspiracy theories concerning the threat that demographic change poses to America's decreasing White majority (Hagle 2019). Examples include the White genocide conspiracy theory and the "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory. In recent years, Fox News commentators have increased the prominence of these conspiracy theories in mainstream political discourse by highlighting the threat that demographic change poses to White Americans. Commentators have noted that the promotion of such conspiracies are especially prevalent among the network's primetime commentators. Key promoters of the White genocide and "Great Replacement" conspiracy theories with primetime evening slots include Tucker Carlson,[83] Laura Ingraham,[84] and Jeanine Pirro[85]. The fact that majority-minority threat was most significantly associated with Whites' exposure to information disseminated in the daily talk show slots of the network's schedule thus makes sense in this context.

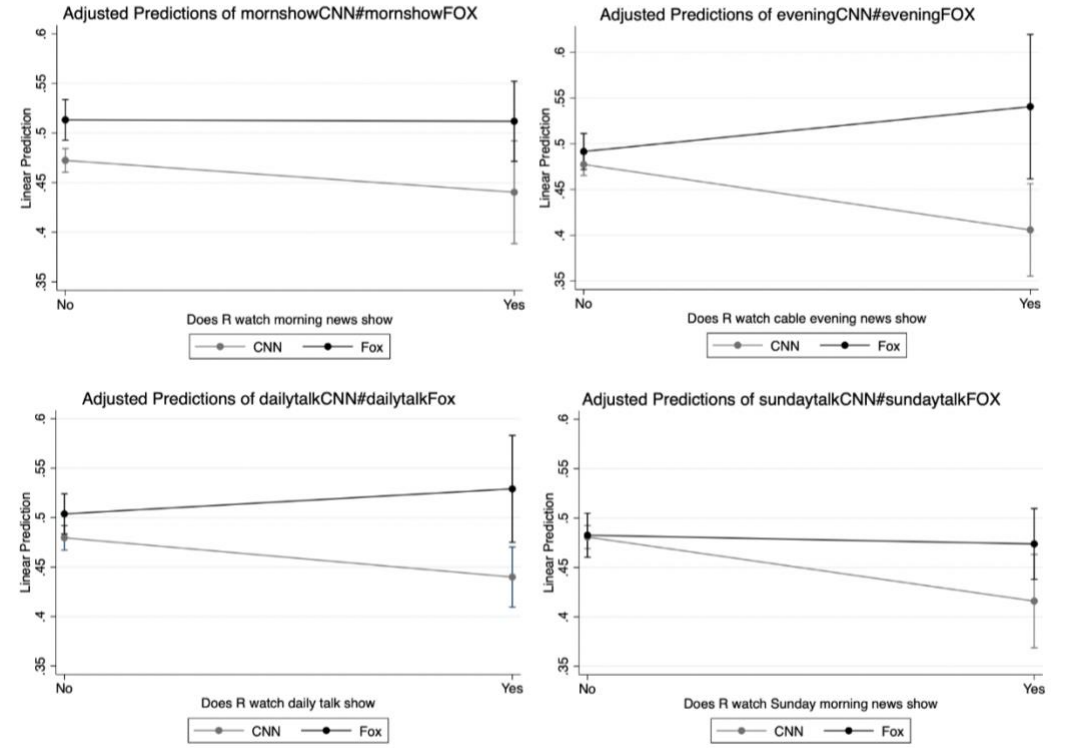
[82] For further robustness, these findings are also confirmed by a series of two-way ANOVAs that I conducted to compare whether the mean levels of majority-minority threat were significantly different depending on Whites' sources of news consumption. The results of these two-way ANOVAs are presented in **Appendix A.**

[83] Commentators note that Carlson, who has called White supremacy a "hoax" among other things (Rueb & Taylor, 2019), has made "Great Replacement" theory a 'nightly fixture' on his primetime evening show (Rousseau, 2019).

[84] Likewise, Adam Serwer (2019) of The Atlantic notes that Laura Ingraham's remarks about 'massive demographic change' caused by an influx of illegal immigrants are reflective of historical patterns of American nativism grounded in White nationalist conspiracy theories.

[85] Elsewhere, Jeanine Pirro commented that the plot of those who hated President Trump and his voters was to 'remake America' by 'bring[ing] in the illegals'. Echoing the underlying contention of "Great Replacement" theory, Pirro noted this was a plot to 'replace American citizens with illegals who will vote for Democrats' (Neese 2019).

Figure 6.9: The Relationship Between Majority-Minority Threat and Whites' Sources of News



Notes: All models specified with a two-way interaction term between the CNN/Fox variables. Dependent variable is level of majority-minority threat. All covariates in models are set to their respective mean values. Data are weighted. Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans. Vertical lines are 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Source: 2016 Voter Study

I have shown so far that the radicalisation of Whites' perspectives can be explained by exposure to news sources such as Fox, which increasingly promote conspiracy theories related to the impact of majority-minority ethnoracial change on the dominant-status of Whites. Importantly, the radicalisation of perspectives concerning demographic change also modifies the political behaviour of White Americans. For instance, exposure to information about majority-minority change has been shown to result in the radicalisation of White racial attitudes (Craig & Richeson, 2014a). Exposure to information concerning the threat of demographic change to dominant-majority status also leads Whites to endorse more

conservative policy positions, (Craig & Richeson, 2014b) and support socially conservative political movements such as the Tea Party (Willer et al., 2016).

In the era of whiteshift (Kaufman, 2018), demographic change is increasingly functioning as a lightning-rod that attracts disillusioned majorities to radical right populist actors. In the next section, I assess whether the threat of impending majority-minority demographic change leads to an increase in levels of support for Trump among White Americans

Immigration Views, Trust, and Support for the US Radical Right

The last section analysed the sources of group threat. I found that Whites' exposure to information concerning the impact of majority-minority demographic change from sources of news such as Fox is closely related to salient levels of majority minority threat. However, resonance between what Whites hear on TV regarding the perceived threat of diversity to their majority status and the rhetoric of Trump during the 2016 campaign is only one factor. Another important factor is the relationship between the immigration views of White voters and the increasing distrust so many have with their elected representatives. When voters in liberal Western democracies feel as though their representatives no longer speak for them on issues such as immigration, they abandon mainstream politics in favour of political offers from actors/parties of a more radical bent (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017).

In this section, I analyse the relationship between immigration views, trust in politicians, and support for radical right movements and actors. I am interested in whether Whites who had become distrustful of mainstream politicians for their failure to reduce immigration turned to Trump. To assess these contentions, I first assess whether immigration preferences and trust are linearly related. Next, I track levels of political interest among

White Americans with a preference for immigration reduction. Lastly, I use data from the 2016 ANES to see how receptivity to authoritarianism, low levels of political efficacy, and anti-politician sentiment all feed into Whites' levels anti-immigrant sentiment. I argue that the interaction between these factors provided fertile ground for a radical actor such as Trump to become the receptacle for the votes of Whites who had hostile views of immigrants.

The first step was to assess whether hostile immigration views are related to low levels of trust in government. The literature on the relationship between immigration and trust has tended to focus on trust in the social capital context. Such analyses are primarily concerned with the relationship between immigration views and lower levels of generalised trust. These studies gauge levels of generalised trust using items related to socialised norms that are similar to those found in seminal sociological surveys such as the GSS (Kesler & Bloemraad, 2010). Here, however, I am interested in the ways in which the perceived failure of mainstream politicians to halt immigration feeds into levels of political trust among voters. While there is some literature on the relationship between immigration views and trust in politicians in a number of advanced Western democracies (McLaren, 2012; Chang & Kang, 2018), I am not aware of any significant studies concerning the US. Therefore, not only is further testing this hypothesis important to addressing the second research question posed in the current chapter, but the findings also provide a novel contribution to the existing literature on trust and immigration in US politics.

Therefore, to assess the strength of the relationship between hostile views on immigration and distrust of government among White Americans, I estimated a multiple regression model. I draw on items from the 2016 ANES for my analysis. My dependent variable was respondents' proclivity to trust those in Washington to do what is right. My key

explanatory variable is a composite measure of anti-immigrant sentiment.[86] The results of the multiple regression model are presented in **Table 6.3.**

Table 6.3: The Relationship Between Immigration Views and Trust

	2016 ANES
Anti-Immigrant	.021**
	(.007)
Assessment of National Economic Trends	.106***
	(.022)
Can People be Trusted	.096***
	(.021)
Participation in Voluntary Activities	.003
	(.035)
Party ID	.053***
	(.021)
Ideology	.032
	(.017)
Gender	-.058
	(.034)
Age	-.001
	(.001)
Education	-.004
	(.009)
Income	-.001
	(.002)
Constant	2.864***
	(.172)
Adjusted $\boldsymbol{R^2}$	.118
N	2,321

Notes: Table entries are standardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors given in parentheses. Dependent variable is level of trust in those in Washington to do what is right. Cases are weighted using ANES post-election weight (full sample). Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites.

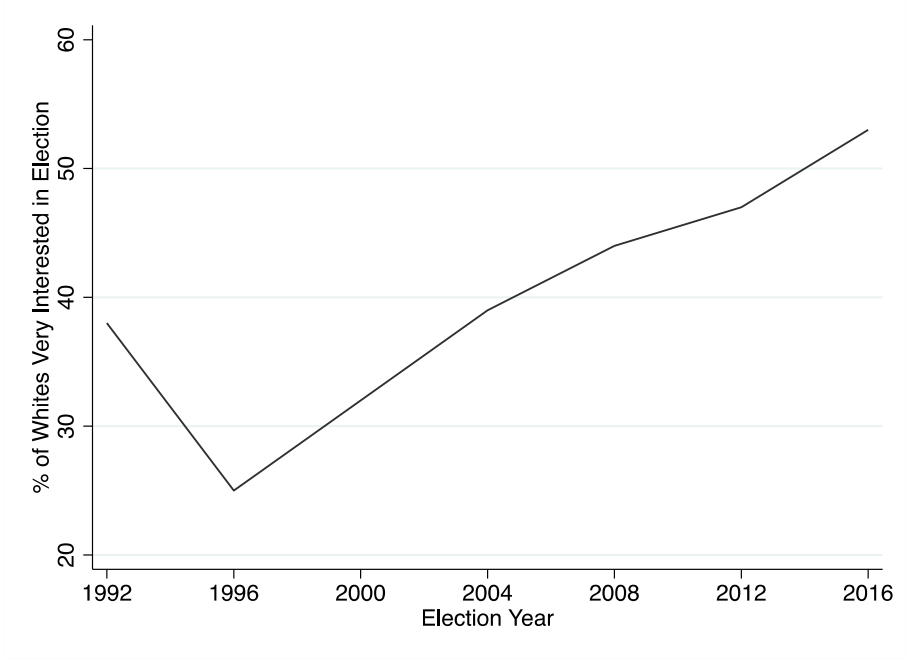
Source: 2016 ANES

[86] I include controls for economic evaluations, social capital (interpersonal trust and participation in voluntary organisations), and sociodemographic indicators. For additional robustness, I also control for liberal-conservative ideological self-placement and party ID (ranging from strong Democrat to strong Republican), as an individual's ideological/partisan leanings are likely to be connected to attitudes towards immigration, with Whites who identify as Republican/conservative being most hostile towards immigrants (Hajnal & Rivera, 2014).

Table 6.3 shows that, even after controlling for predictors known to be related to political trust, including assessments of national economic trends, levels of social capital, and partisanship/ideology, anti-immigrant views are positively and significantly related to distrust of those in Washington, β = .021, p <.01. Thus, the results indicate that Whites immigration views are indeed affecting perceptions of those in Washington.

Having established that there is a significant correlation between immigration views and distrust of government, the next step was to assess how this distrust feeds into Whites' engagement with politics. The literature has long shown that higher levels of distrust in government are also associated with lower levels of political interest (Watts, 1973; Craig, 1979). Consistent with the "voice route" hypothesis (Kaufmann & Goodwin, 2018), however, Whites who are highly polarized by their views on immigration might be the exception to this rule. That is, Whites with salient levels of anti-immigrant sentiment might have low levels of political efficacy when it comes to mainstream politics. However, Whites' levels of political interest will nonetheless remain high as it is the case that they are abandoning the main political parties in favour of radical movements who promise to restrict immigration. To analyse levels of political interest among White Americans with a preference for immigration reduction, I graph the percentage of Whites who reported being "very interested" in national elections by election year in **Figure 6.10** below. I limit my sample to Whites who wanted immigration decreasing "a little" or "lot" across each wave of the ANES.

Figure 6.10: Interest in Elections Among Whites with a Preference for Immigration Reduction, 1992-2016



Notes: Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans who want levels of immigration to be decreased either "a little" or "a lot". N = 6320. Data smoothed using locally estimated regression (LOESS).

Source: ANES Cumulative Datafile

Figure 6.10 shows that levels of political interest among Whites with a preference for immigration reduction were 38 per cent in 1992. 1992 was a notable election because of the candidacy of Ross Perot. Perot stood on a platform of protecting American workers from unfair foreign competition. Synthesising anti-immigration policy with a protectionist message on trade, Perot (1993) warned that trade deals such as NAFTA would result in an increase of illegal immigration from Mexico, flooding the US labour market with cheap foreign workers (p. 72). After Perot's significant third-party challenge in 1992, political interest plummeted in

1996.[87] This low figure of 25 per cent in 1996 was followed by a gradual increase in levels of political interest in every subsequent election cycle.

It is important to place the figures concerning the electoral cycles between 2000 and 2016 within the context of Congressional immigration policy during the 2000s and early 2010s. The rise in political interest among Whites with a preference for immigration reduction has coincided with attempts by the federal government to pass a series of amnesties. Attempts to pass the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act[88] in the 110th Congress (2006-2007) were met with a sharp backlash. Indeed, the offices of Representatives and Senators were inundated with so many calls against the law that the Congressional switchboard was shut down for a time (Tichenor, 2016, p. 261).

There was a further significant attempt to pass amnesty via the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013. The views of Whites on the proposed 2013 immigration reform bill are well documented. For instance, a 2013 Pew Research survey showed that Whites were broadly supportive of allowing illegal immigrants to stay in the US, with 67 per cent of non-Hispanic Whites in favour of granting legal status to illegal aliens (Pew Research Center, 2013). Though, this figure was markedly less for non-White racial groups. Here, 82 per cent of African Americans and 80 per cent of Hispanics supported allowing illegal immigrants to remain in the US.

The results of **Figure 6.10** are consistent with Kaufman and Goodwin's (2018) "voice route" hypothesis in that levels of political interest among Whites with a preference for immigration reduction are not decreasing. Far from becoming disinterested in politics, it is rather the case that Whites are increasingly turning away from mainstream politicians and

[87] Perot ran again in the 1996 Presidential Election, but interest in his candidacy among the media and the general public failed to reach levels of his 1992 run for President. This was reflected both in pre-election polling and in his lower vote share in 1996 relative to 1992.
[88] If passed, the Act would have provided a pathway to citizenship for some 12 million illegal immigrants.

political parties to support radical political movements who better-speak to their views on immigration. Indeed, Americans' dismay at Congress's attempts to pass amnesty are reflected in increased levels of participation in movements that aim to restrict immigration (Ball 2013). For example, Numbers USA spearheaded the populist revolt against the 2007 amnesty. The grassroots conservative movement had less than 50,000 members in 2004. By July 2007, at the peak of the lobbying effort against the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act, this number had swelled to 450,000 (Pear, 2007). Increased participation in such movements were thus early signs during the 2000s that a certain cohort of Americans were beginning to abandon mainstream politics in support of more radical alternatives.

Perhaps the most significant conservative movement to arise during the backlash to immigration reform in the early 2010s was the Tea Party movement. While the Tea Party has been framed as a fiscally conservative movement that calls for lower taxes and a reduction of the US national debt, scholars have noted that the Tea Party is also a culturally conservative movement whose members are mobilised by out-group anxiety and nativism (Barreto et al., 2011; Tope et al. 2015). Demographically, the Tea Party is an overwhelmingly White movement whose supporters are less educated than those who are non-supporters (Williamson et al., 2011; Arceneaux & Nicholson 2012; Abramowitz 2013).[89]

By 2016, it was clear that Trump had become the repository for the votes of Whites with a preference for immigration reduction. I do not seek to make restatements of this point, since the relationship between hostile immigration views and support for Trump is already well documented in the literature (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Rather, the argument I make for my analysis here - and one that, importantly, has not been unpacked - is that Whites

[89] I highlight these demographic indicators because, tellingly, non-college educated Whites (Trump's core base of support) were also among the least supportive of providing a pathway to legal residence for illegal aliens in the 2013 Pew Survey. Indeed, only 61 per cent of this demographic believed that illegal immigrants should be allowed to stay legally in the US (Pew Research Center, 2013).

dismayed by their elected representatives for their failure to reduce immigration were drawn to Trump. This is because they saw him as a strong leader who was willing to circumvent Congress in order to implement a restrictionist immigration agenda. While authoritarianism has been correlated with vote choice for Trump across a number of political psychological studies (MacWilliams, 2016; Mather & Jefferson, 2016; Choma & Hanoch, 2017; Womick et al., 2019), the interaction between immigration views and authoritarianism has not been explored in this context.

I hypothesise that the relationship between immigration views and receptivity to authoritarianism is indeed interactive. The interaction will be such that Whites with salient levels of anti-immigrant sentiment who are least trusting of politicians, and have low levels of political efficacy, will be the most receptive to the idea that the US needs a strong leader. To test this hypothesis, I ran a three-way ANOVA to determine the effects of anti-politician sentiment, low levels of political efficacy, and receptivity to authoritarianism[90] on Whites' levels of anti-immigrant sentiment. **Table 6.4** provides a summary of the results from the three-way ANOVA estimated by means of a univariate generalised linear modelling (GLM) procedure.[91] Statistical significance was accepted at $p < .01$ for main effects. These effects were qualified by a statistically significant three-way interaction between anti-politician sentiment, low levels of political efficacy, and receptivity to authoritarianism, $F(6, 2041) = 1.965$, $p < .001$.

[90] Anti-politician sentiment is measured on a 5-point scale where respondents were asked if "politicians are the main problem in the US". Efficacy is measure on a 5-point Likert scale where respondents were asked if "people like me have no say in what the government does". And authoritarianism is measured on a 5-point Likert scale where respondents were asked if the US "needs a strong leader to take the country back to its true path".

[91] Again, I specify party ID and ideology and covariates in the univariate GLM model because of the close relationships between these variables and distrust of politicians and anti-immigrant sentiment in the literature (Hajnal & Rivera).

Table 6.4: Three-Way ANOVA Summary Table for Effects of Anti-Politician Sentiment, Low Political Efficacy, and Authoritarian Receptivity on Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

Effect	F	p
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects		
Party ID	22.168	.000***
Ideology	45.235	.000***
Anti-Politician	6.421	.000***
Political Efficacy	5.894	.000***
Strong Leader	35.813	.000***
Political Efficacy X Strong Leader	2.411	.001**
Political Efficacy X Anti-Politician	2.082	.007**
Strong Leader X Anti-Politician	2.835	.000***
Political Efficacy X Strong Leader X Anti Politician	1.965	.000***

Notes: Adjusted R^2 = .402. Data are weighted. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 ANES

To better illustrate the interaction between these factors, it is useful to compare the estimated marginal means for anti-immigrant sentiment across levels of the independent variables. For Whites who strongly disagreed that the US needed a true leader to take the US back to its "true path", who had the highest levels of political efficacy, and who was least likely to agree that politicians were main the problem in the US, the estimated marginal mean for anti-immigrant sentiment was 4.06.[92] Contrastingly, Whites most receptive to the idea that the US needed a strong leader, who reported the lowest levels of political efficacy, and the

[92] The minimum score on the anti-immigrant scale is 3, with a maximum of 12 for those being the most hostile towards immigrants.

highest levels of anti-politician sentiment, the estimated marginal mean for anti-immigrant sentiment was 9.485.

The results of the three-way ANOVA are important because they highlight that low-efficacy, distrust of mainstream politicians, and a desire for a strong leader presented a perfect confluence of factors for a radical actor like Trump to garner electoral success among Whites with hostile immigration views in 2016. Trump was fiercely critical of what he described as "the elites" for their failure to fix America's immigration system during the campaign (Kruse 2018). However, it was a co-articulation of these sentiments with Trump's positioning of himself as a strong leader who operated outside of the existing political system in Washington that was also significant in appealing to Whites who had low levels of efficacy in mainstream politics. Having established that 2016 was unique in that the election cycle presented a unique opportunity for a radical populist actor to mobilise Whites who had previously given up on mainstream politics, I now proceed to examine whether Whites who were threatened by demographic change in 2016 have a high probability of voting for Trump.

The Effect of Majority-Minority Threat on White Vote Choice

In this section I assess whether Whites threatened by the prospect of ethnoracial demographic change were mobilized to vote for Trump in 2016. To do this, I employ an analytic strategy that works in three ways. First, I operationalise survey items from a national large-N dataset that ask White respondents whether they are threatened by demographic change into a composite measure of majority-minority threat. Next, I use this measure in regression to see whether Whites threatened by demographic change have an increased and statistically significant probability of voting for Trump. Lastly, I analyse whether the threat of demographic change was a predictor of White vote choice that was unique to 2016, or

whether majority-minority threat is a construct that shapes the vote choice of White Republican partisan identifiers across election cycles.

My principal source of data to gauge Whites' levels of majority-minority threat is the 2016 Voter Survey (Democracy Fund Voter Study Group, 2016). The 2016 Voter Survey does not contain a single measure of majority-minority threat. Rather, it presents respondents with information regarding Census projections concerning the fact that non-White ethnoracial groups will constitute a majority of the US population by 2043. After being presented with this information, respondents are then asked whether they agree/disagree with the following four statements concerning the impact of impending demographic change:

1. Americans will learn more from one another and be enriched by exposure to many different cultures.
2. A bigger, more diverse workforce will lead to more economic growth.
3. There will be too many demands on government services.
4. There will not be enough jobs for everybody.[93]

Source: 2016 Voter Survey

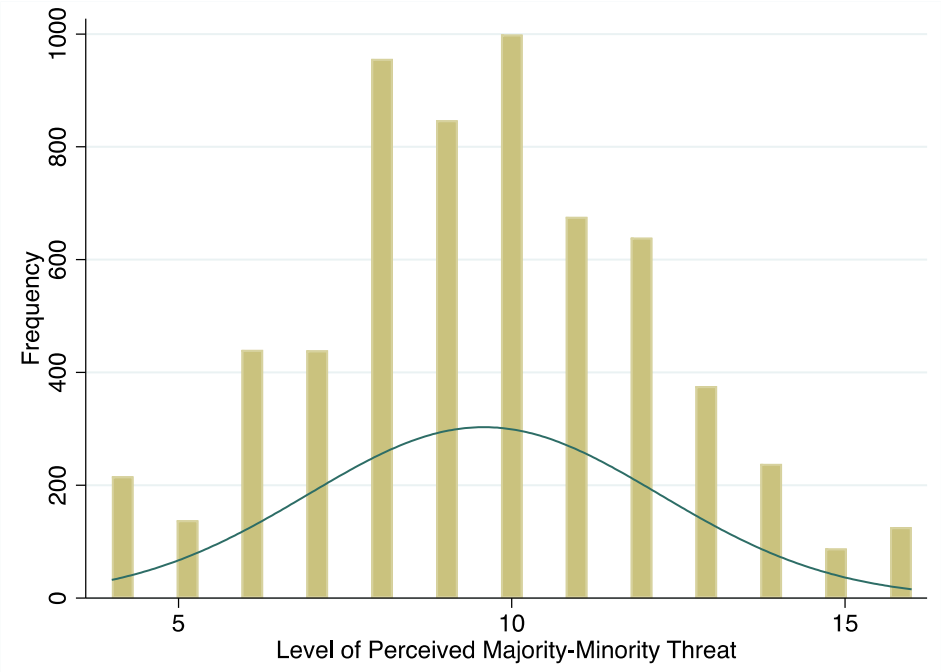
For the purpose of my analysis, these items were computed into a single variable.[94] With this computed measure of majority-minority ethnic threat, the first step was to assess whether Whites are broadly threatened by the prospect of demographic change. **Figure 6.11**

[93] One concern with the measure of majority-minority threat is that the additive index may be tapping into White voters' material assessments about the impact of demographic change, as opposed fears about cultural change itself. To assess whether this was the case, I estimated an additional vote choice model which includes only the first item (cultural assessments) in the index. Results of this additional vote choice model do not appear to differ substantively from those presented in **Table 6.5**, and are presented in **Appendix B**.

[94] The new computed variable labelled majminthreat had a minimum score of 4 and a maximum score of 16. Overall, the four items composing the measure had a Cronbach's α = .782.

graphs the distribution of majority-minority threat among White Americans. As evidenced by **Figure 6.11**, White Americans are not broadly threatened by the prospect of demographic change; the bell-shaped normal distribution curve is displaced slightly to the left of a mid-range score of 10. Indeed, the mean score for majority minority threat among the sample of N = 6,178 White Americans is 9.58.

Figure 6.11: The Distribution of Majority-Minority Ethnic Threat among Whites



Source: 2016 Voter Survey

Next, I ran an independent samples t-test on the sample of N = 5,445 Whites who voted for either of the major party candidates in 2016 to see if there were significant differences in levels of majority-minority threat between categories of two-party vote choice. The results of the independent samples t-test showed that White Trump voters had statistically significantly higher levels of majority-minority threat (10.894 ± .042) compared to Whites who voted for Clinton (7.974 ± .045), t (28) = -47.839, p <.001.

Table 6.5: Probit Model Showing Effect of Majority-Minority Threat on White Vote Choice in 2016

	2016
Majority-Minority Threat	.401***
	(.029)
Party ID	.978***
	(.041)
Ideology	1.369***
	(.101)
Gender	-.123
	(.123)
Age	-.011*
	(.005)
Marital Status	.400**
	(.138)
Education	-.129**
	(.048)
Income	-.017
	(.023)
Union	-.033
	(.155)
Evangelical Christian	.372*
	(.151)
South	.173
	(.133)
Constant	1.048
	(.156)
Pseudo R^2	.833
N	4,565

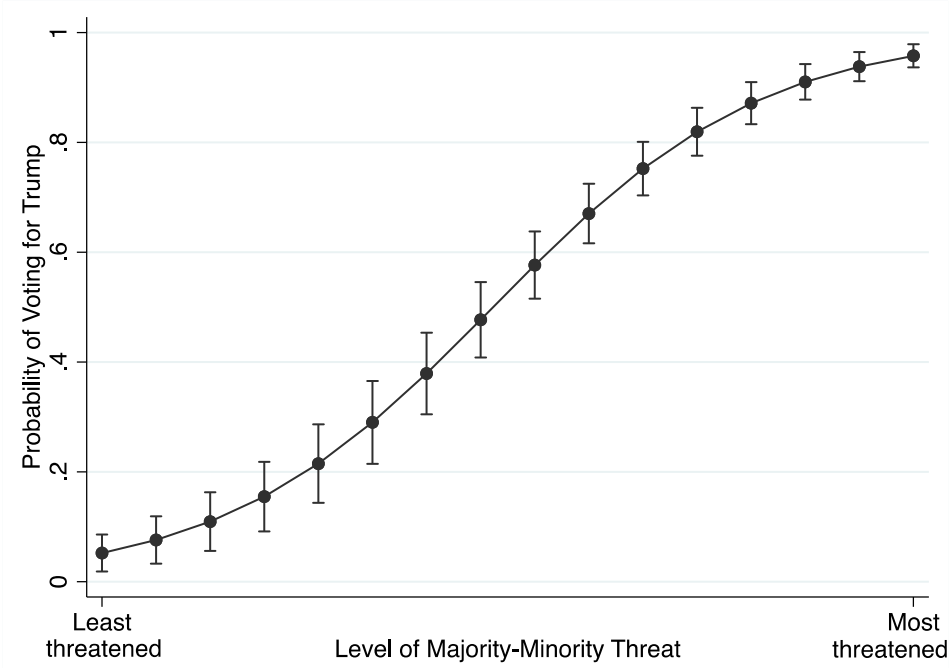
Notes: Table entries are beta coefficients. Standard errors given in parenthesis. Dependent variable vote choice for Clinton or Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites. *p <.05 **p <.01***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Survey

While these results quantify the extent to which there are differences between subsets of White 2016 voters, they do not inform us as to the relative salience of majority-minority threat as a predictor of White vote choice for Trump. As such, I estimated a binary probit model with the computed measure of majority minority threat as an explanatory variable of White vote choice. **Table 6.5** presents the results from the vote choice model. I also control

for variables known to influence Presidential vote choice such as partisanship and ideology, as well as a host of sociodemographic/economic indicators. As indicated by Table 6.6, the coefficient for majority-minority threat is positive and significant at β = .401, p <.001.

Figure 6.12: Probability of Voting for Trump by Level of Majority-Minority Threat



Notes: Probit models contain the same controls for vote choice and as probit model in **Table 6.5**. All covariates in probit model set to their respective means. Vertical lines are 95 percent confidence intervals. Dependent variable is vote choice for Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Cases are weighted. Sample limited to non-Hispanic White Americans.

Source: 2016 Voter Survey

Figure 6.12 uses the results of the probit model to graph the predicted probability of voting for Trump by levels of majority-minority threat. As **Figure 6.12** shows, higher levels of majority and minority threat are associated with an increased probability of voting for Trump. Moving from the lowest score of perceived threat to the highest score increased the predicted probability of voting for Trump by .91 (out of a maximum of 1.0). In

contextualising these results it is important to note the large changes in the probability that a White voter will choose Trump for President occur while holding all other variables known to influence Presidential vote choice at their respective means. This includes variables that are especially significant in the era of increased polarisation in American electoral politics, such as partisanship and political ideology.

An important consideration regarding the relationship between salient levels of majority-minority ethnic threat and White vote choice for Trump is whether the effect was unique to the 2016 election, or whether this is simply the continuation of a trend among White Republican partisan identifiers. Answering this question is not straightforward because I am not aware of any presidential election surveys from 2012 that include items regarding levels of perceived ethnic threat. Despite this lacuna, the 2016 Voter Survey contains an item on respondents' recall of their 2012 Presidential vote choice. As such, I use this item to assess whether majority-minority threat was an especially salient force in shaping White vote choice in 2016. **Table 6.6** presents the results of a bivariate probit model that simultaneously predicts the 2012 and 2016 two-party vote of White respondents. I use bivariate probability regression here because the simultaneous estimation of two vote choice models for 2012 and 2016 allows me to account for the fact that a White voter's choice for President in 2016 was likely related to their vote choice in 2012. As **Table 6.6** shows, the coefficients for majority-minority threat are more strongly associated with the vote choice of whites in 2016 (β = .210, p <.001) than they are for 2012 (β = .095, p <.01).

To get a better sense of how majority-minority threat mattered in the 2016 election relative to the 2012 election, I used postestimation techniques on the bivariate probit model to examine the probability of a White individual switching their vote between 2012 and 2016. These results, presented in **Figure 6.13**, which indicates the predicted probability of being a White voter who switched from Obama to Trump (an Obama-Trump voter) or Romney to

Clinton (a Romney-Clinton voter) based on the change in the level of majority-minority threat. **Figure 6.13** graphs this predicted probability while holding all other sociodemographic covariates at their respective means.

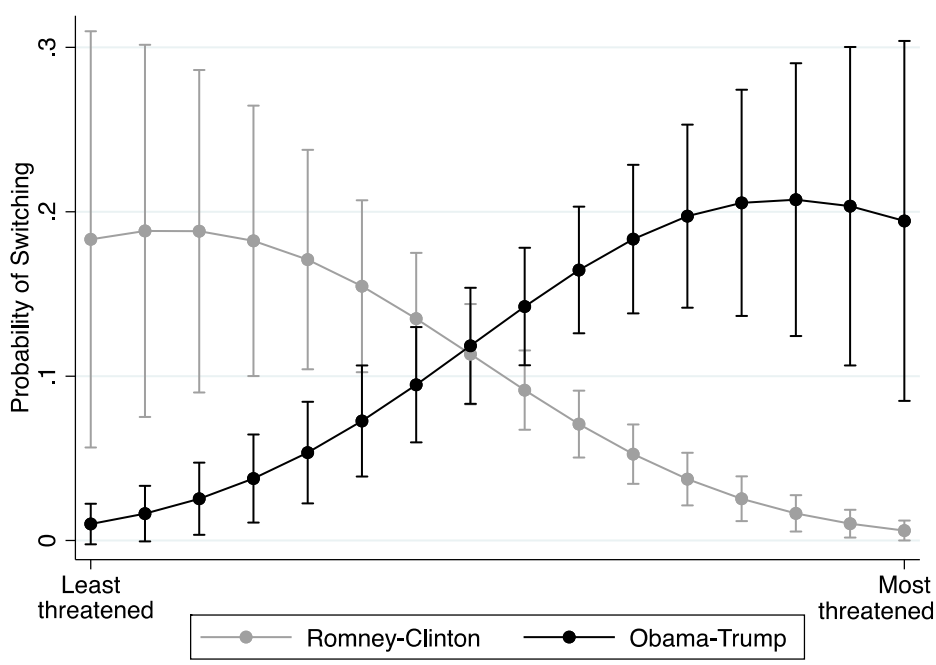
Table 6.6: Bivariate Probit Estimates of the Effect of Majority-Minority Threat on Two Party Vote Choice in 2012 and 2016

	2012	**2016**
Majority-Minority Threat	.095**	.210***
	(.029)	(.021)
Party ID	.462***	.473***
	(.035)	(.039)
Ideology	.501***	.675***
	(.108)	(.099)
Female	-.347**	-.313**
	(.117)	(.108)
Age	-.012*	-.014**
	(.005)	(.004)
Married	-.018	-.020
	(.143)	(.122)
Education	.045	-.099*
	(.052)	(.041)
Income	.063*	.036
	(.026)	(.022)
Union	-.188	.004
	(.131)	(.164)
Evangelical	.163	.088
	(.159)	(.139)
South	.201	.125
	(.137)	(.127)
Constant	18.901*	21.634**
	(9.711)	(8.724)

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parenthesis. Dependent variable for model 1 is vote choice for Obama or Romney; 0 = "Obama"; 1 = Romney. Dependent variable for model 2 is vote choice for Clinton or Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites who voted for either of the two major presidential candidates in 2012 and 2016. Rho = .479. N = 4,239. *p <.05 **p <.01***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Survey

Figure 6.13: Probability of Voting for Obama or Trump and Romney or Clinton by Level of Majority-Minority Threat



Notes: Predicted probabilities based on bivariate probit model presented in **Table 6.6**. All sociodemographic covariates in bivariate probit model set to their respective means. Vertical bars are 95 per cent confidence intervals. Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites who voted for either of the two major presidential candidates in 2012 and 2016

Source: 2016 Voter Survey

The graph shows that moving from a position of not being threatened to being threatened by demographic change was strongly associated with being a White Obama-Trump voter. A White voter most threatened by majority-minority demographic change was almost four times as likely to be an Obama-Trump voter than one who was less threatened by the prospect. This increase in the probability of being an Obama-Trump voter with higher levels of perceived threat coincided with a decline in being a Romney-Clinton voter.

Whilst **Figure 6.13** demonstrates that majority-minority threat was more important for predicted the 2016 vote than the 2012 vote, how can we be sure that this 2016 effect is

about Trump's emphasis on immigration and demographic change rather, than an Obama effect on the issue of race (Tesler 2012; 2016)? To explore the possibility that an anti-Obama effect routed in racial resentment is not driving these effects, I estimate an additional bivariate probit model. This model begins with the same set of variables presented in **Table 6.6**, but includes additional controls for racial resentment (measured using the standard 4-item battery), as well as a four-point ordinal item that asks respondents how favourable they view Obama (1 = "very favourable," 4 = "very unfavourable"). If an anti-Obama effect rooted in racial resentment is driving this significant effect on 2016 vote choice through majority-minority threat, de minimis, then we should expect to observe a weak and insignificant effect through majority-minority when the additional controls are added to the model. The results of the additional bivariate probit model are presented below in **Table 6.7**.

As evidenced by **Table 6.7,** accounting for these two additional variables in the model slightly reduces the size of the bivariate probit coefficient for majority coefficient for majority minority threat ($\boldsymbol{\beta = .193}$) relative to the estimates presented in Table 6.6 **(** $\boldsymbol{\beta = .210}$). However, it is important to note that majority minority threat remains a statistically significant predictor (p <.01) of 2016 vote choice relative to 2012 despite the addition controls for racial resentment and unfavorable views of Obama. Given these results, we can be reasonably confident that the effect of majority-minority threat on the 2016 vote is not being significantly mediated by a distinct anti-Obama effect grounded in Whites' feelings of racial resentment.

In sum, my analysis of the 2016 Voter Survey data reveals that majority-minority threat mattered more in shaping the 2016 vote choice of White Americans than it did in 2012, and that is was related to an increased probability of White Obama voters moving into the Trump column in the next election cycle. Consequently, the threat of increasing ethnoracial diversity was an important predictor of White choice in 2016, a finding that is consistent with

other findings in the academic literature which use other principal sources of data (Craig et al., 2018; Knowles & Tropp, 2018; Major et al., 2018; Mutz, 2018).

Table 6.7: Bivariate Probit Estimates of the Effect of Majority-Minority Threat on Two Party Vote Choice in 2012 and 2016

	2012	**2016**
Majority-Minority Threat	-.252*	.193**
	(.097)	(.073)
Racial resentment	.275***	.390***
	(.081)	(.120)
Unfavourable view of Obama	1.217***	1.372***
	(.120)	(.122)
Party ID	.709***	.827***
	(.090)	(.095)
Ideology	.188	.315*
	(.121)	(.144)
Female	-.226**	-.112
	(.077)	(.073)
Age	.087	.157*
	(.071)	(.078)
Married	-.097	-.102
	(.071)	(.052)
Education	.106	-.109
	(.085)	(.084)
Income	.140	-.006
	(.095)	(.090)
Union	-.100	.042
	(.055)	(.074)
Born again	.161*	-.024
	(.067)	(.076)
South	.016	-.114
	(.060)	(.065)
Constant	.021	.277***
	(.060)	(.060)

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parenthesis. Dependent variable for model 1 is vote choice for Obama or Romney; 0 = "Obama"; 1 = Romney. Dependent variable for model 2 is vote choice for Clinton or Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Sample limited to Whites who voted for either of the two major presidential candidates in 2012 and 2016. Rho = .100. N = 3,647. *p <.05 **p <.01***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Survey

Conclusion

In conclusion, the objective of the chapter was to assess the robustness of the "changing America" thesis as an explanatory context for why so many White Americans were mobilised to vote for Trump in 2016. At the core of the third and final explanatory context is the notion of diversity. Since the 1970s, America has changed from a nation that was predominately descended from White Europeans to one that is more ethnoculturally plural. A significant consequence of this increasing diversity is that interaction with members of the "opposite race" and ethnicity has become an increasing factor in the daily lives of millions of Americans.

Groups react to this increasing diversity in different ways. And these reactions are best encapsulated in two important and competing hypotheses concerning the ways in which diversity modifies group behaviour. In the context of this chapter, of critical importance are the ways in which diversity modifies the electoral behaviour of White Americans. Putnam (2007) famously contends that diversity causes groups to "hunker down" and become withdrawn from civic and community life. Importantly, this means that Whites who live in diverse communities will have a propensity to be less electorally engaged. Conversely, Kaufmann and Goodwin (2018) contend that diversity actually leads groups such as Whites to become more electorally engaged as their opposition to diversity becomes more salient.

Putnam's (2007) "hunker down" thesis helps explain why levels of social capital for Whites living in diverse communities are so low. However, an important limitation of Putnam's thesis as it applies to understanding Whites' electoral behaviour in the context of Trump is that Whites with higher levels of civic engagement tend to live in Whiter communities. This is an important observation because community homogeneity has important implications for levels of social capital in such communities. Communities which are more racially homogenous will have better social capital outcomes relative to those that

are more heterogenous. Importantly, my analysis of the Census data confirms that Whites living further away from diverse locales such as metropolitan areas have higher rates of voter registration and voter turnout in 2016 than Whites in metropolitan areas.

Therefore, I would qualify that diversity is an important variable in helping us to better understand why so many Whites voted for Trump in 2016. However, it has more to do with Whites' perceptions of diversity rather than their contact with diversity. To understand this point, it is useful to think back to the 1970s when forced bussing - policies enacted as a part of the broader effort to desegregate in the Civil Rights Era - drove many Whites from urban centres in the Midwest such as Chicago and Detroit. Whites chose to move out of these urban locales in part because of their opposition to living in multiracial neighbourhoods. In doing so, they migrated to exurban and rural areas which were more racially homogenous. In these sorts of communities, Whites experience less contact with diversity in their day-to-day lives because they are living in neighbourhoods that, demographically speaking, are also largely White. For Whites living in overwhelmingly White communities, therefore, perceptions of diversity are far more important in shaping Whites' political behaviour as opposed to actual contact with members of the opposite race.

I have shown that perceptions of diversity are altered via the radicalisation of Whites' perspectives. My hypothesis being that the radicalisation of perspectives occurs when Whites are exposed to information concerning the impact of demographic change from television Networks such as Fox. To explore this hypothesis, I used data from the 2016 Voter Study which included a number of useful variables concerning the principal sources of Whites' news and information. When we compare Whites, who watch Fox as opposed to Whites who watch shows on CNN, I find that levels of majority-minority threat are stronger among Whites who reported that their principal sources of news tended to be from the former network. This important finding helps explain why so many Whites feel threatened by

diversity even though they live in homogenous neighbourhoods and have minimal day-to-day contact with ethnic minorities; the data indicate that it might have more to do with the ways in which their perspectives are modified by media narratives concerning how increasing diversity will erode their majority status.[95]

Importantly, exposure to information concerning the impact of demographic change also modifies Whites' political behaviour (Craig and Richeson 2014). When we test the salience of majority-minority threat against the probability that a White voter will vote for Trump, we find that Whites with high threat levels have a greatly increased likelihood of voting for Trump. Clearly, then, the results speak to Trump's ability to court White voters who felt threatened by the prospect of losing their majority status. In sum, my analysis of the data point to Kaufmann and Goodwin's (2018) "voice route" hypothesis as being the more robust hypothesis that helps us to better-understand Trump's particular appeal to White Americans who are especially worried about America's increasing diversity.

[95] Given the cross-sectional design of the 2016 Voter Study, however it is important to qualify that there might be a degree of reverse causality in the Fox News consumption → majority-minority threat relationship. For instance, the perceived threat of demographic change might also lead Whites to select into media outlets who cover demographic change in a manner which already conforms to their existing views.

Chapter 7: Bringing it all Together

Introduction

The principal and overarching objective of the doctoral thesis was to better understand the currents that created the conditions for Trump's victory in the 2016 US Presidential election. To meet this objective, the doctoral thesis sought to understand which particular dimension of White estrangement from mainstream politics Trump's victory best represented. On the one hand, the perceived failure of political elites to attest to the economic grievances of White voters may explain why so many Whites voted for Trump (Gest 2016; Williams 2017) (left behind thesis). Equally, however, scholars posited that Trump's victory was predicated upon his demonisation of racial minorities and other putative outsiders in an attempt to appeal to White in-group interests (Jardina 2019; Thompson 2020) (cultural decline thesis). Elsewhere, scholars have hypothesised whether Trump's victory represented the successful political mobilization of a cohort of White voters that increasingly felt as though their dominant-group position was being threatened by America's increasing ethnic and racial diversity (Major et al. 2018; Mutz 2018) (changing America thesis).

In the preceding three principal findings Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I have demonstrated how all of these factors are associated with vote choice for Trump to varying degrees. In this chapter, the doctoral thesis aims to assess which of these three particular theses has the greatest amount of explanatory power when we seek to understand why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). To do this, the chapter estimates a vote choice model using data from the 2016 Voter Study. Specifically, the chapter estimates a model that fully accounts for the various economic, cultural and socio-cultural explanations of Trump's victory delineated in the preceding three chapters, as well as the host of socio-demographic and structural covariates outlined in the methodology chapter.

Crucially, this estimation strategy allows for comparison of the magnitude, direction, and significance of the various effects of each explanatory variable. Consequently, we will be able to empirically approximate which factor (or, indeed set of factors) were the most salient predictors of White vote choice. This is important because we will then be able to tell whether Trump's victory is best understood in light of traditional frameworks that have long been applied to understand voter behaviour (for instance, rational choice economic voting), or indeed, whether his election represented a more fundamental re-alignment of White voting patterns (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018).

Once the chapter has established which factor (or set of factors) were the most salient in contributing to Trump's victory, the discussion chapter then turns to assess the limitations of this knowledge. One factor to consider is whether any of the other candidates for President in 2016 would have been successful in appealing to the same set of economically, culturally, and socio-culturally aggrieved Whites that voted for Trump. Therefore, the chapter specifies a series of alternative vote choice models where White respondents were presented with a number of hypothetical candidate matchups for President.

Economic, Cultural, or Sociocultural Explanations?

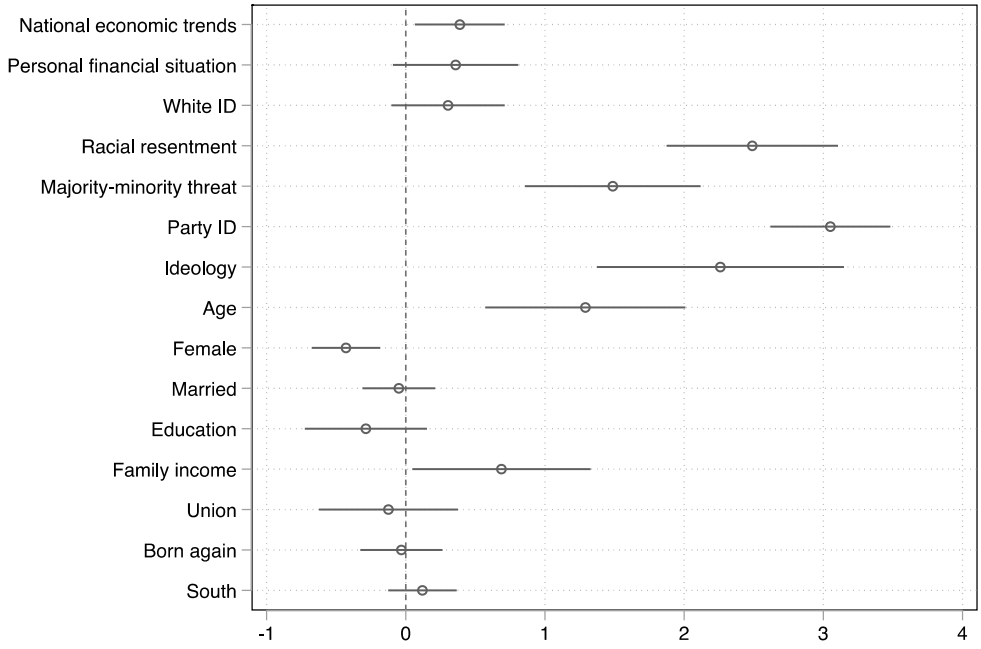
Now that we have a substantive approximation of the various factors which contributed to Trump's victory in 2016 as outlined in Chapters 4 through 6, this Chapter now turns to probe which of these factor(s) – namely economic, cultural, or sociocultural - have the greatest amount of explanatory power when we try to understand why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballots for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018).

To assess which factor (or factors) contributed the most to White vote choice, this discussion chapter estimates a vote choice model using data from the 2016 Voter Study. Unlike the models presented in the three principal findings chapters, this model crucially

accounts for the significant principal explanatory variables in a simultaneous fashion. To account for the effects of economic assessments on the probability that a White voter will cast their ballot for Trump (left behind thesis), models are estimated with controls for voters' negative national and personal economic assessments. Next, to account for the effects of in-group favouritism and out-group prejudice (Jardina 2019; Schaffner et al. 2018) on White vote choice, models also account for the strength of a respondent's White identity centrality, and their levels of racial resentment. Finally, to account for the effects of perceived threat from diversity on vote choice (Major et al. 2018; Mutz 2018), models account for a respondent's levels of dominant majority demographic threat. In addition to these principal explanatory variables, the vote choice model also adjusts on the same socio-demographic and structural covariates outlined in the methodology section in Chapter 3.

Figure 7.1 is a plot of coefficients that depicts the various effect sizes of each of the variables in the fully specified vote choice model. It is also important to note that, since the variables have been rescaled to range between 0 and 1, that the effect sizes in the model are somewhat comparable. Points to the right of the x axis in **Figure 7.1** indicate a positive relationship between vote choice and a given variable of interest – or a higher probability of a White voter having cast their ballot for Trump. Conversely, points to the left of the x axis in **Figure 7.1** indicate a negative relationship, or a higher probability of a White voter having cast their ballot for Clinton.

Figure 7.1: Effect Size of Explanatory Variables on Vote Choice for Trump



Notes: Points represent the size of each probit coefficient. The lines are 95 per cent confidence intervals. All variables in model scaled to range between 0 and 1. Sample limited to White Trump/Clinton voters. Data are weighted.

Source: 2016 Voter Study

As evidenced by **Figure 7.1**, all of the principal explanatory variables are positively related to vote choice for Trump. Despite the fact that the trend of all the explanatory variables are in the expected direction, it is important to note that White voters' negative personal economic evaluations, as well as White identity, do not meet the acceptable level of statistical significance ($p < .05$). This is an important observation because while both of these predictors were significantly associated with vote choice by themselves in Chapters 4 and 5, their statistical significance diminishes when we account for the other predictors in a simultaneous fashion. Turning to the principal explanatory variables that retain their statistical significance when accounting for all of the explanatory variables, we see that White voters' negative national economic assessments are significant at the $p < .05$ level.

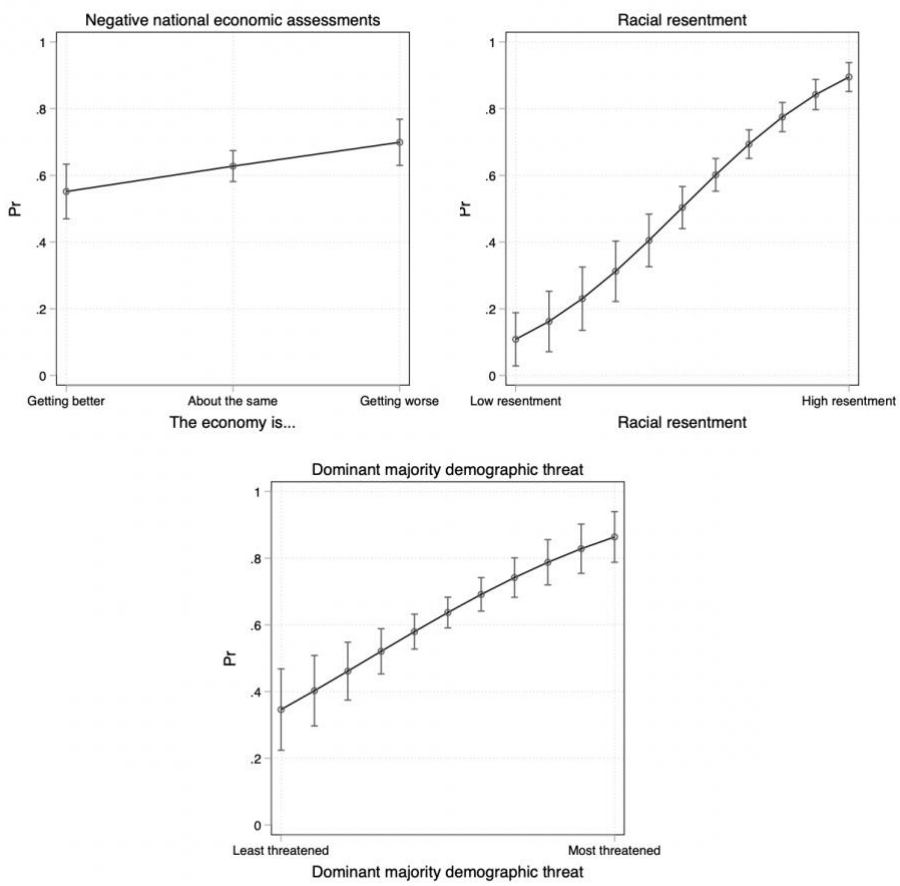
Despite this significant effect, however, it is important to note that the coefficient for negative national economic assessments is somewhat small.

By way of contrast, both racial resentment and dominant-majority demographic threat exhibit much larger effects on vote choice relative to voters' negative national economic assessments. The effects of both variables are strongly significant ($p < .001$), and are surpassed only by Republican partisan identification and conservative ideological self-placement. Overall, then, an examination of the effect sizes of each of the explanatory variables in the fully specified vote choice model points to White voters' cultural and sociocultural concerns being the most salient predictors of vote choice for Trump. Conversely, there is less of a case to be made that voters' economic assessments were substantive predictors of White voter behaviour in 2016 net of the other variables in the model. To better assist substantive interpretation of the effects of the significant explanatory variables on White vote choice, I use postestimation to plot the predicted probability that a White voter will cast their ballot for Trump at each level of the explanatory variables. Predicted probabilities for negative national economic assessments, out-group prejudice, and dominant majority demographic threat are presented below in **Figure 7.2**.

Figure 7.2 begins to answer which explanation – namely economic, cultural, or socio-cultural – best accounts for Trump's strong showing among White voters in 2016. The top left panel in **Figure 7.2** indicates that increasingly negative evaluations of the robustness of the national economy were associated with a high probability of having voted for Trump in 2016. A White voter in 2016 who thought that the national economy was in a better state relative to the previous 12 months has a .55 predicted probability of voting for Trump. By contrast, a White voter who thought that the national economy had gotten worse in the past year had a .70 predicted probability of voting for Trump. Therefore, worsening assessments

of the robustness of the national economy are associated with an increase in the predicted probability of having voted for Trump of 15 points.

Figure 7.2: Vote Choice for Trump as a Function of Negative National Economic Assessments, Out-Group Prejudice, and Dominant Majority Demographic Threat



Notes: Points represent the predicted probability of voting for Trump at each level of the significant explanatory variables. The vertical lines are 95 per cent confidence intervals. Predicted probabilities calculated by holding gender, marital status, labour union affiliation status, "born again" status, and region constant at female, married, union member, "born again" Christian, and South, while holding all other variables in model at their respective mean values. Model also controls for negative personal economic evaluations, White identity, party ID, ideology, age, education, and family income.

Source: 2016 Voter Study

Given this 15-point baseline, a key question to be asked is whether out-group prejudice is a more salient predictor of White support for Trump in 2016 than White voters'

negative national economic assessments? The top right panel in **Figure 7.2** tests this expectation. The graph indicates that a White voter with a minimum score on the racial resentment scale has just a .11 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump over Clinton. Conversely, a White voter with a maximum score on the racial resentment scale has a .89 predicted probability of voting for Trump. Consequently, moving from least to most resentful on the racial resentment scale is associated with an increase in the predicted probability of having voted for Trump of a remarkable 78 points.

Lastly, the bottom panel in **Figure 7.2** plots the predicted probability of having voted for Trump as a function of a White voter's level of dominant-majority demographic threat. The bottom panel indicates that a White voter who scored average on all other values in the model but exhibited the highest levels of threat on the dominant majority demographic scale has a .86 predicted probability of casting their ballot for Trump. Contrastingly, a White voter with a mean score on all other variables who exhibits the lowest levels of threat has just a .35 predicted probability of voting for Trump. Overall, moving from least to most threatened on the threat scale is thus associated with an increase in the predicted probability of a White voter preferring Trump over Clinton of 51 points

In sum, the results of the predicted probabilities outlined in **Figure 7.2** point to racial resentment and dominant-majority demographic threat being the explanatory variables that are most strongly associated with having voted for Trump in 2016. While voters' negative national economic assessments mattered, it is important to note that the effects on vote choice (.15) are dwarfed by those of racial resentment (.78) and dominant majority demographic threat (.51) as voters become increasingly resentful and threatened. These results are important because they provide us with a further indication that more traditional frameworks that have long been used to examine vote choice – for instance, rational choice economic voting (Lewis-Beck & Paldam 2000) – do not fully account for White voter behaviour in the

2016 US Presidential election. Rather, the results are consistent with the observation that voters' cultural and socio-cultural concerns are becoming salient electoral cleavages that mobilise individuals to vote for populist actors in advanced Western democracies (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018; Norris and Inglehart 2018).

Having established that racial resentment and dominant majority demographic threat exhibited the largest effects on vote choice net of the other explanatory variables in the vote choice model, the next section will consider the robustness of these findings. Specifically, the chapter will re-estimate the vote choice model with a host of other indicators that are associated with both racial resentment and dominant majority-demographic threat. As will be clear, this is to assess whether the additional controls substantively affect the significance and the direction of the results presented thus far.

Considering Alternative Explanations: Testing the Robustness of Racial Resentment and Dominant-Majority Demographic Threat

The previous section demonstrated that the effects of racial resentment and dominant majority demographic threat appear to account for Trump's success over and above the effects of the other explanatory variables. Nonetheless, it is also important to be aware of alternate explanations that have been put forward to explain Trump's victory, as well as how these explanations may intersect with those explored in depth in the doctoral thesis. An important factor to consider is the relationship between the Alt-Right and support for Trump.[96] One possibility is that the effects of out-group prejudice and perceived threat from

[96] Inspired by Donald Trump's nativist campaign, the Alt-Right quickly became Trump's voluntary online army during the 2016 campaign, attacking Trump's critics on Twitter and other online venues (Nagle 2017). This raised new concerns about the Trump campaign, which was already breaking taboos on subjects such as race and America's increasing diversity. The apparent connection between the Alt-Right and the Trump campaign was further reinforced when the Trump campaign hired Steve Bannon as its chief executive in 2016. Bannon is the former leader of Breitbart News, and at one time described Breitbart as "the platform of the Alt-Right" – though there is some disagreement about what he meant by this (Green 2017).

diversity on vote choice for Trump are being driven by Whites with the most radicalised perspectives on issues such as race and demographic change. Indeed, there is evidence of a relationship between these views and affect for White nationalist organisations such as the Alt-Right (Hawley 2017). Consequently, to assess whether the effects of the variables racial resentment and majority-minority threat on vote choice are primarily driven by Whites with the most radicalised views in these areas of public opinion, vote choice for Trump is also estimated with a feeling thermometer that gauges affect for the Alt-Right.[97]

Individuals with authoritarian attitudes are also likely to hold radicalised views on race and demographic change (Kteily et al. 2011). These views are especially salient because they can be mobilised into political cleavages by radical right movements and political actors who stoke animus and resentment in order to garner political and electoral success (Bonikowski 2017). This observation partly explains why social dominance orientation (SDO) and right-wing authoritarianism (RWA)– statistically measurable constructs of authoritarian attitudes – are correlated with support for the radical right (Aichholzer & Zandonella 2016; Mayer et al. 2020), as well as support for Trump specifically (Choma & Hanoch 2017; Womick et al. 2019). Therefore, to assess whether authoritarianism substantively affects the coefficients for racial resentment and perceived threat, the vote choice model contains an additional control for authoritarian attitudes.[98]

Despite the importance of authoritarian attitudes as a predictor of support for Trump, scholars have also proposed that populist attitudes are associated with White racial attitudes and public opinion towards the impact of demographic change on Whites' majority status. A

[97] The Alt-Right thermometer ranges between 0 and 100. A minimum score of 0 indicates that a White respondent gives the Alt Right "very cool or unfavourable estimations." By contrast, a maximum score of 100 indicated that a respondent gives the Alt Right "very warm or favourable estimations."

[98] Authoritarian attitudes are measured using the standard SDO scale for child rearing. The SDO child-rearing scale is composed of 4 items that asks White respondents to choose which behaviours are more desirable in child rearing. These are: **i)** independence or respect for elders; **ii)** curiosity or good manners; **iii)** obedience or self-reliance, and **iv)** considerate or well behaved.

crucial dimension of populist sentiment is distrust in government, as well as anger at political elites (Pauwels 2011; Akkkerman et al. 2014; Oliver and Rahn 2016). In the case of ethnonationalist populism specifically, majority groups perceive that political elites favour putative outsiders (often immigrants and racial minorities) at the expense of majority-group members (Bonikowski 2017). As such, if majority group members (Whites) feel as though the system is rigged against them, such feelings are likely to also be grounded in the perception that the system is rigged to favour non-group members. Therefore, to assess whether populism attitudes affect the signifance of the effects of racial resentment and majority-minority threat on vote choice for Trump, models accordingly include additional controls for trust in government and anti-elitism.[99]

This discussion chapter tests whether any of these additional variables substantively affect the direction and significance of the results of the vote choice model presented in the previous section by specifying a series of additional models. These additional models further consider the hypothetical relationships between the explanatory variables and Alt right affect, authoritarian attitudes, trust in government, and populist sentiment. Consistent with the estimation strategy in the three principal findings chapters, these models also control for various socio-demographic and structural covariates delineated in the methodology chapter. The results of the additional models are presented below in **Table 7.1**.

For better comparison with the results of the baseline model, **Table 7.1** also contains the probit coefficients for the model outlined in the previous section. The second column in **Table 7.1** contains the additional controls for Alt-Right affect and authoritarian attitudes

[99] Trust in government is gauged using a three-point ordinal item that asks respondents how often they trust those in Washington to do what is right. Possible responses ranged from 1 "all of the time," 2 = most of the time," 3 = some of the time." Anti-elitism is an additive index of three items (Cronach's α = .59) that ask White respondents the extent to which they agree with the statements: **i)** "elections today don't matter, things stay the same no matter what happens in Washington;" **ii)** "people like me have no say in what the government does;" and **iii)** "elites in this country don't understand the problems I am facing."

(measured on the SDO scale). The coefficient for the Alt-Right thermometer is positive and significant at p <.001, indicating that greater affect for the Alt-Right is associated with a higher probability of having voted for Trump in 2016.[100] The coefficient for authoritarian attitudes is also a positive and significant predictor of White vote choice in the second model p <.05. While the effect of authoritarianism on vote choice does not rival that of White affect for the Alt Right in terms of magnitude and statistical significance, the second model provides evidence that both variables have a degree of association with vote choice for Trump. Importantly, controlling for these additional variables does not affect the direction and signifance of the effects of the racial resentment and majority-minority demographic threat on vote choice for Trump. Indeed, as evidenced by the slightly larger coefficients for both explanatory variables in the second model relative to the baseline model, the results indicate that accounting for these additional controls may actually increase the explanatory power of racial resentment and majority-minority demographic threat.

In the third column in **Table 7.1**, I explore the effects of anti-elitism and distrust in government on the explanatory variables. Turning first to examine the effects of trust in government, we see that the probit coefficient is positive and significant at the p<.01 level. It is important to note that the variable is coded such that higher values are indicative of lower levels of trust in government. As such, the third model is indicating that lower levels of trust are positively associated with vote choice for Trump. The coefficient for the anti-elitism

[100] While this finding would seem to indicate a degree of association between White affect for the Alt-Right and support for Trump, it is important to qualify that the proportion of Whites who are willing to express positive feelings towards the Alt-Right form a relatively small part of the Trump coalition. It is certainly the case that those willing to express support for the Alt-Right form a larger part of Trump's voter base than they did Clinton's base; results of a one-way ANOVA indicated that there were significant differences in levels of Alt-Right affect between White Trump and Clinton voters (F[1, 3,365] = 1,470.69, p <.001). An examination of means via Tukey's post hoc test also indicated that Whites who voted for Trump give the Alt-Right a mean thermometer score of 45 out of 100, relative to a mean score of just 13 out of 100 for White Clinton voters. Nonetheless, this mean score of 44 for White Trump voters is still indicative of relatively cool estimations towards the Alt-Right. Indeed, only per 17 per cent of White Trump voters give the Alt-Right a thermometer rating that is greater than one standard deviation above this mean value.

index is also positively and significantly associated with the probability of a White voter having cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (p <.01).

Table 7.1: Probit Models of Two-Party Vote Choice

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
National economic trends	.388* (.164)	.556*** (.213)	.399* (.161)	.607** (.215)
Personal financial situation	.358 (.229)	.150 (.251)	.504* (.213)	.370 (.241)
White identity	.303 (.207)	.504 (.263)	.135 (.192)	.455 (.263)
Racial resentment	2.489*** (.314)	2.716*** (.408)	2.516*** (.291)	2.609*** (.380)
Majority-minority threat	1.487*** (.322)	1.605*** (.397)	1.507*** (.333)	1.586*** (.419)
Party ID	3.050*** (.220)	3.038*** (.248)	3.031*** (.217)	2.914*** (.240)
Ideology	2.260*** (.453)	1.973** (.570)	2.265*** (.434)	2.098*** (.547)
Age	1.290*** (.366)	1.724*** (.462)	1.227*** (.232)	1.430** (.416)
Female	-.430*** (.125)	-.557** (.160)	-.387** (.121)	-.486** (.152)
Married	-.050 (.133)	-.163 (.160)	-.048 (.127)	-.146 (.159)
Education	-.247 (.223)	-.451 (.268)	-.313 (.214)	-.473 (.248)
Family income	.687* (.236)	1.384*** (.392)	.458 (.312)	1.277** (.388)
Union	-.124 (.254)	-.494 (.285)	-.003 (.218)	-.353 (.241)
Born again	-.031 (.150)	-.168 (.178)	-.037 (.150)	-.189 (.180)
South	.119 (.125)	.124 (.159)	.160 (.129)	.137 (.162)
Alt-Right thermometer	. 	1.100*** (.283)	. 	1.129*** (.281)
Authoritarianism	. 	.703* (.309)	. 	.839** (.308)
Trust in government		. 	.979** (.316)	.979** (.368)
Anti-elitism		. 	1.272*** (.356)	1.221** (.430)
Constant	4.249*** (.384)	-5.180*** (.589)	-6.018*** (.542)	-6.860*** (.722)
Pseudo R^2	.754	.785	.769	.769
N	3,780	2,611	3,678	2,559

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors are given in parentheses. Dependent variables are two-party vote choice where 1 = "Trump," 0 "Clinton." All variables scaled to range between 0 and 1. Sample limited to Whites only. Data are weighted. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Study

Notwithstanding the significant effects of low levels of trust in government and anti-elite attitudes on vote choice, it is important to note that controlling for these additional variables in the model does not substantively affect the coefficients for racial resentment and majority-minority demographic threat. Indeed, both of the explanatory variables remain significant at the $p < .001$ level despite the additional controls. Further, and as was the case in the second model, there is also some evidence to suggest that accounting for populist attitudes may actually increase the explanatory power of out-group prejudice and threat as predictors of White support for Trump.

Finally, the fourth model in **Table 7.1** is the fully specified model, and controls for the effects of all four variables simultaneously. Even when accounting for all four variables in the vote choice model, we see that racial resentment and majority-minority demographic threat are largely robust to the additional controls. Consequently, we can express a relative degree of confidence that out-group prejudice and threat are salient predictors of White vote choice for Trump that function independently of the effects of affect for White nationalist movements, authoritarianism, and populist sentiment.

To better understand whether attachment to White identity or racial resentment is driving the significant results for majority-minority threat, I estimate another series of vote choice models. The results of these additional models are presented below in **Table 7.2**. Model 1 is a baseline vote choice model. Model 2 includes an additional control for White identity. Model 3 controls contains an additional control for racial resentment. Model 4 controls for White identity and racial resentment without the majority-minority threat scale. Lastly, Model 5 is a fully specified model that controls for majority-minority threat, White identity, and racial resentment.

Table 7.2: Testing the Relationship Between Majority-Minority Threat and Vote Choice for Trump

	Baseline	With White ID	With racial resentment	White ID & racial resentment only	Full
Majority-minority threat	2.510*** (.247)	2.523*** (.267)	1.625*** (.300)	.	1.694*** (.319)
White identity	.	-.073 (.185)	.	-.228 (.183)	-.337 (.199)
Racial resentment	.	.	2.392*** (.290)	2.903*** (.282)	2.448*** (.301)
Party ID	3.256*** (.203)	3.255*** (.204)	3.076*** (.308)	3.116*** (.203)	3.063*** (.206)
Ideology	2.810*** (.424)	2.813*** (.422)	2.221*** (.439)	2.387*** (.420)	2.253*** (.437)
Age	1.236*** (.238)	1.253*** (.341)	1.202** (.346)	1.198*** (.340)	1.248*** (.349)
Female	-.246* (.107)	-.241* (.104)	-377** (.117)	-.364** (.111)	-.357** (.116)
Married	-.001 (.125)	.003 (.123)	-.053 (.128)	-.052 (.122)	-.029 (.127)
Education	-.403* (.186)	-.407* (.188)	-.244 (.205)	-.263 (.203)	-.262 (.214)
Family income	.237 (.301)	.230 (.296)	.345 (.337)	.220 (.335)	.298 (.337)
Union	.059 (.258)	.059 (.256)	.016 (.261)	-.019 (.250)	.011 (.257)
Born again	.008 (.135)	.011 (.134)	-.035 (.146)	-.027 (.144)	-.025 (.146)
South	.292** (.197)	.289** (.106)	.119 (.117)	.098 (.116)	.101 (.117)
Constant	-4.485*** (.329)	-4.469*** (.331)	-5.162*** (.355)	-4.651*** (.343)	-5.099*** (.352)
Pseudo R^2	.714	.714	.746	.738	.748
N	4,634	4,627	3,940	3,989	3,935

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors are given in parentheses. Dependent variables are two-party vote choice where 1 = "Trump," 0 "Clinton." All variables scaled to range between 0 and 1. Sample limited to Whites only. Data are weighted. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Study

As evidenced by the first column in **Table 7.2**, the probit coefficient for majority minority threat is positively related to vote choice for Trump (β = 2.510, p <.001). Moving onto Model 2, including an additional control for White identity does not substantively affect the size of the probit coefficient for majority-minority threat - the coefficient remains positively related to the dependent measure (β = 2.523), and retains its p <.001 significance.

This finding is noteworthy because it suggests that the relationship between majority-minority threat and vote choice for Trump might have less to do with attachment to White identity. To test this possibility further, Model 3 indicates that controlling for racial resentment substantially reduces the size of the probit coefficient for majority-minority threat (β = 1.625), though the coefficient retains its p <.001 level of statistical significance. In substantive terms, this means that the relationship between majority-minority threat and 2016 vote choice is largely driven by outgroup prejudice as opposed to attachment to White identity. Indeed, the final model in **Table 7.2** confirms this expectation, as controlling for the simultaneous effects of White identity and racial resentment yields a remarkably similar result to Model 3.

Vote Choice in Alternate Scenarios

The previous section explored whether the effects of racial resentment and majority-minority threat were robust to a host of other indicators that are likely to be correlated with White racial attitudes and public opinion concerning the impact of demographic change of Whites' dominant majority status. Having established that out-group prejudice and majority-minority demographic threat were robust to these additional controls, the discussion chapter next turns to assess whether these effects were unique to Trump's candidacy. As will be clear, it is important that we are able to quantify whether Trump was able to uniquely activate these sentiments, or whether we would have observed similar effects had another candidate been on the ballot in 2016 instead of Trump.

This latter consideration is a reasonable expectation, given the nature of political polarization and the enduring strength of partisanship as a predictor of vote choice in Presidential elections. Today, voters "sort" according to their partisan preferences. Sorting can be conceptualised as the process through which voters with specific viewpoints migrate

to certain groups based on their partisan identity (Levendusky 2009). Sorting has therefore given rise to a relative degree of intra-party homogeneity in voter attitudes towards a number of issues (Druckman et al. 2013).[101] Consequently, it is possible that any significant effects on vote choice observed through constructs such as racial resentment are simply indicative of the extent of intra-party ideological homogeneity on issues such as race and demographic change in an era of high polarization.

Given the nature of partisan sorting and political polarization, it is necessary to assess the extent to which Trump's candidacy is responsible for the significant effects of Whites' cultural and socio-cultural grievances on two-party vote choice in 2016. To test this expectation, I once again turn to the 2016 Voter Study. In addition to asking White voters which candidate they cast their ballot for in 2016, the survey also presented respondents with a series of hypothetical general election matchups for two-party vote choice. With these items, I re-estimated the baseline explanatory model delineated in **Table 7.1**. The results of the alternate models for two-party vote choice are presented below in **Table 7.2**.

To allow for direct comparison of the direction, magnitude, and significance of these effects relative to the effects of the explanatory variables on actual two-party vote choice, **Table 7.2** once again contains the results of the vote choice model using validated voter data. If a given predictor was likely to be more potent in shaping White voter choice when Trump was on the ballot, de minims, then we should expect to observe weaker and less-significant effect sizes for each of the explanatory variables relative to the model that estimates actual two-party vote choice. The second and third columns in **Table 7.3** present the results of two

[101] For instance, the Republican Party has become a repository for voters with salient levels of racial animus; a pattern of partisan sorting that was partly accelerated during the Obama presidency because of race-based opposition to his signature policies such as the Affordable Care Act (ACA) (Tesler 2012).

models estimating hypothetical two-party vote choice if Trump were replaced with one of the unsuccessful candidates for the 2016 Republican nomination.

These models begin to answer the question of whether Trump was uniquely poised to mobilise voters cultural and socio-cultural grievances, or whether another Republican candidate would have been able to replicate his success in the general election by appealing to the same sentiments. **Table 7.3** demonstrates that, if Rubio or Cruz had been on the ballot, racial resentment would still have been a significant predictor of White vote choice for the Republican candidate. Though the size of the probit coefficient for racial resentment is smaller in the vote choice models for Rubio (β = 2.180) and Cruz (β = 2.154) than the actual vote choice model (β = 2.489), the coefficients retain their p <.001 level of statistical significance across the three models. In substantive terms, this means that anti-Black prejudice would have functioned in a similar manner regardless of whether or not Trump was the Republican nominee.

A more noteworthy pattern of results can be seen when it comes to the salience of majority-minority threat. As indicated here, the probit coefficient for majority minority threat in the alternate models for Rubio (β = .821, p <.05) and Cruz (β = .983 p = n.s.) are much less substantial in both magnitude and statistical significance than that in the actual model (β = 1.487, p <.001). These results are particularly interesting because they suggest that perceptions of demographic threat mattered *because of* Trump's presence on the ballot. Therefore, while outgroup prejudice was likely to be a significant factor in two-party vote choice *regardless of* who was the Republican nominee for President, the findings lend some weight to the hypothesis that attitudes towards demographic change were uniquely important predictors of White vote choice because of Trump.

Table 7.3: Hypothetical Candidate Matchups of Two-Party Vote Choice

	Clinton vs Trump (actual)	Clinton vs Rubio	Clinton vs Cruz	Sanders vs Trump
National economic trends	.388* (.164)	.563*** (.213)	.299 (.228)	-.157 (.201)
Personal financial situation	.358 (.229)	-.014 (.242)	.146 (.247)	.438* (.224)
White identity	.303 (.207)	-.860*** (.203)	-.882*** (.212)	.006 (.189)
Racial resentment	2.489*** (.314)	2.180*** (.309)	2.154*** (.332)	1.841*** (.314
Majority-minority threat	1.487*** (.322)	.821* (.389)	.983 (.392)	1.099** (.331)
Party ID	3.050*** (.220)	3.468*** (.234)	3.082*** (.246)	2.744*** (.222)
Ideology	2.260*** (.453)	1.651*** (.433)	2.381*** (.458)	2.013*** (.454)
Age	1.290*** (.366)	.821* (.375)	.642 (.394)	-.349 (.373)
Female	-.430*** (.125)	-.441** (.132)	-.211 (.141)	-.236* (.136)
Married	-.050 (.133)	.316 (.175)	.381* (.174)	.267 (.160)
Education	-.247 (.223)	.111 (.249)	-.112 (.269)	-.038 (.221)
Family income	.687* (.236)	.460 (.492)	.273 (.486)	.421 (.434)
Union	-.124 (.254)	-.164 (.262)	-.326 (.286)	-.347 (.256)
Born again	-.031 (.150)	.261 (.168)	.223 (.151)	.271 (.177)
South	.119 (.125)	-.026 (.127)	.020 (.134)	.241 (.140)
Constant	4.249*** (.384)	-3.749*** (.422)	-4.282*** (.452)	-4.436*** (.439)
Pseudo R^2	.754	.727	.724	.661
N	3,780	3,906	3,828	4,027

Notes: Table entries are probit coefficients. Robust standard errors are given in parentheses. Dependent variables are two-party vote choice where 1 = "hypothetical Republican candidate," 0 = "hypothetical Democratic candidate." All variables scaled to range between 0 and 1. Sample limited to Whites only. Data are weighted. *p <.05 **p <.01 ***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Study

Another factor to consider is how White vote choice in 2016 may have been different had Clinton not secured the Democratic nomination. This is an important consideration given the stark policy differences in economic policy that emerged between Clinton and Sanders

during the 2016 Democratic primaries.[102] It is reasonable to expect that Sanders' willingness to vastly increase spending on government welfare programs might have appealed to economically-disadvantaged Whites who were otherwise attracted to Trump's candidacy because of his emphasis on protecting the American worker from unfair economic competition.

Beyond differences in economic policy between candidates for the Democratic nomination, it is also useful to note that the role of identity politics in the campaigns of both Clinton and Sanders were somewhat different. Inclusivity and the championing of America's increasing diversity were integral messages to Clinton's presidential campaign. By contrast, Sanders co-opted a class-based message during his campaign while emphasising these aforenoted cultural issues somewhat less than Clinton. Consistent with these observations, it is also reasonable to expect that, had Sanders been on the ballot in the general election instead of Clinton, that the campaign in the general election might have been less-dominated by cultural "wedge" issues. Given the absence of a candidate on the ballot willing to advocate for these "wedge" issues, therefore, voters' cultural and socio-cultural cleavages may have been less salient predictors of White vote choice in a Sanders versus Trump race.

To further explore these theoretical expectations, the final column in **Table 7.3** present the results of another vote choice model in a hypothetical matchup where Sanders is the Democratic nominee as opposed to Clinton. As evidenced by the negative coefficient for voters' national economic evaluations, **Table 7.3** indicates that Trump may have had less appeal to economically-pessimistic White voters had Sanders been on the ballot instead of Clinton. We also observe a reduction in the size of the coefficients for White identity, racial

[102] A self-avowed socialist, Sanders went further than Clinton in pledging to use the instruments of government to improve the economic conditions of the American working-class and middle-class. Among Sanders' proposals, for instance, was Medicare for all, free college tuition, and a $15 minimum wage (Pearlstein 2016).

resentment, and majority-minority threat in the Sanders versus Trump model relative to the validated voter model. Consequently, the Sanders versus Trump model provides some evidence in favour of the hypothesis that White voters' cultural and socio-cultural grievances might have been less salient had Clinton not been on the ballot.

Overall, the results of **Table 7.3** present some evidence of the enduring strength of political polarization and partisan sorting on White political behaviour. The effects of sorting and polarization are most apparent when it comes to racial resentment; the coefficient for the construct is strongly positive and significant (p <.001) across all models. Despite this finding however, it is important to note that there is a degree of heterogeneity in vote choice across candidate matchups, and that the effects of certain variables are far stronger when Trump is on the ballot.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored which particular dimension of White estrangement from mainstream politics ("left behind" thesis, cultural decline thesis, changing America thesis) has the greatest amount of explanatory power when we seek to understand why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016. To provide a robust synthesis of the findings I observed in Chapters 4 through 6, I estimated a series of vote choice models which aimed to fully account for the economic, cultural, and socio-cultural predictors of White vote choice. In these models, I found that negative national economic evaluations, salient levels of racial resentment, and heightened perceptions of majority-minority threat were all significantly related to vote choice for Trump (p <.05). Notwithstanding these patterns of statistical significance, however, I found substantially larger effect sizes on vote choice through racial resentment and majority-minority threat, while White voters' negative national economic assessments exhibited a relatively weaker effect on vote choice. The results of

these models indicate that explanations of vote choice embedded in cultural and socio-cultural understandings of White estrangement from mainstream politics were more salient than economic accounts of Trump's victory. These findings are particularly noteworthy because they indicate that Trump's victory is not entirely compatible with traditional frameworks (for instance, rational choice economic voting) that have long been used to understand why voters cast their ballots for certain candidates; they speak to a growing body of scholarship which attests to a fundamental re-alignment of voters along the lines of culture in advanced Western democracies (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018).

To test the robustness of these cultural and socio-cultural explanations further, I then hypothesised whether any of the failed candidates for the 2016 Republican nomination would have been similarly poised to appeal to the same set of culturally and socio-culturally aggrieved Whites that voted for Trump. In my models exploring vote choice in alternate scenarios using the 2016 Voter Study data, I found some evidence that racial resentment was likely to a significant factor in 2016 vote choice *regardless* of who was the eventual Republican nominee. While these findings certainly attest to the enduring impact of ideological sorting on vote choice (Druckman et al. 2013), they are also noteworthy given the robust body of literature which attests to the salience of racial resentment as a predictor of White vote choice for Trump specifically (Schaffner et al. 2018). However, we must reconsider the extent to which racial resentment was a unique predictor of support for Trump, especially if - and as my models show - racial attitudes are similarly predictive of hypothetical support for non-Trump Republicans in the general election.

However, the same cannot be said about Whites' perceptions of the impact of demographic change. When it came to the effects of majority-minority threat in the alternate vote choice models, the largest and most significant coefficient was found in the vote choice model of actual two-party vote choice (Trump-Clinton). By contrast, the coefficient for

majority-minority threat was substantially smaller and less significant in the alternate matchups (Rubio-Clinton, Cruz Clinton). These findings are particularly important because they provide strong evidence in favour of the argument that Trump was uniquely poised to active feelings of threat in 2016. Therefore, while racial resentment exhibited a larger effect size than majority-minority threat in the vote choice models, it must be noted that White voters' attitudes towards demographic change were more integral in explaining the Trump vote than their attitudes on race. Having explored which factors contribute the most to our understanding of Trump's victory on the part of White voters in 2016, the next chapter will conclude with a reflection of the significance of the findings, and will look to potential avenues for future research into White voter behaviour.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and Implications for Future Research

Introduction

Trump's unlikely victory in the 2016 Presidential election represented something of a fundamental divergence from the post-war electoral patterns of American voters. Widely derided as a fringe candidate with little chance of winning power throughout the 2016 Republican primaries (Brooks 2015), Trump's rise to the nomination revealed a profound schism between party elites and the Republican voters on issues such as trade and immigration. When this pattern of success was repeated against Hillary Clinton in the general election, this gap between White voters and the elites in Washington became further apparent. Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to understand these developments by better approximating which particular of dimension of estrangement from mainstream politics ("left behind" thesis, cultural decline thesis, changing American thesis) Trump's victory best represents.

The conclusion chapter is structured as follows. I begin by returning to my six hypotheses in order to assess which of them were borne out by my examination of the voter data. This is so that we have a better approximation of which of the three main arguments ("left behind" thesis, cultural decline thesis, changing America thesis) offers the best explanation for why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). After exploring my findings, I look to a number of possible avenues for future enquiry into White voter behaviour, and outline the original contribution to knowledge to which the doctoral thesis lays claim.

Explaining the Rise of Trump in 2016

In order to investigate the broader research objective underpinning the doctoral thesis, the introductory chapter posed three research questions. The purpose of posing these three research questions was so that we could begin to better understand which particular dimension of White estrangement from mainstream politics Trump's unlikely victory in the 2016 Presidential election best representing. A comprehensive review of the vote choice literature in Chapter 2 revealed that there was a dearth of comparative awareness and critical syntheses of the various explanations for Trump's victory. Throughout the thesis, I have argued that this lack of awareness and synthesis in the existing scholarship is problematic if we are to better understand what Trump's victory best represents. This is an especially important consideration given the unprecedented success for right-wing populist actors in a host of advanced Western liberal democracies in recent years. On the one hand, Trump's victory could be an aberration. Equally, however, it could be indicative of a wider pattern of realignment among a cohort of White voters who increasingly feel as though mainstream politicians no longer speak for them (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018).

So that we can better understand what Trump's victory means in this context, the first section of the conclusion will evaluate how well each research question has been answered in light of the broader research objective guiding the thesis. Specifically, the section will explore the results and conclusions reached in each of the preceding three chapters, and will outline how the findings contribute to our existing understanding of why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). Discussion is presented in three sub-sections, each of which correspond to a particular dimension of White estrangement from mainstream politics that were explored in greater detail in Chapters 4 through 6 ("left behind" thesis, cultural decline thesis, changing America thesis). After exploring which of my hypotheses were borne out by the data, the next sub-section will

explore which of the three dimensions of estrangement from mainstream politics provide the best explanation for Trump's victory on the part of White voters.

The Failure of Political Elites to Attest to the Economic Grievances of White Voters

A comprehensive review of the vote choice literature in Chapter 2 revealed that first significant explanatory context was the "left behind" thesis. In order to test whether the "left behind" thesis was a robust frame for helping us better understand why so many Whites voted for Trump in 2016, the doctoral thesis posed the following research question:

1. Is Trump's victory indicative of a White working-class "revolt" against the political elites in Washington for their perceived failure to adequately address their economic grievances?

Underpinning this first research question was a theoretical tension between two competing hypotheses that both attempted to account for vote choice for Trump. Paralleling popular narratives after the victory for leave in the 2016 UK "Brexit" referendum (Mondon & Winter 2019), the first hypothesis (**H1**) posited that Trump's victory was indicative of an electoral "revolt" among the White working-class (Gest 2016; Williams 2017). Proponents of the first hypothesis argued that White voters – and in particular those without a college degree – were mobilized to vote for Trump because his protectionist "America First" agenda resonated with their concerns about unfair foreign competition and downward economic mobility.

By contrast, the second hypothesis (**H2**) posited that labelling Trump's as a" revolt" on the part of the White working-class is unsupported when one approaches the evidence with a more nuanced lens. In support of **H2**, scholars noted that the economic concerns of

White voters were becoming increasingly difficult to extricate from a number of salient cultural grievances, including their fears about economic competition with immigrants (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018). Consequently, conceptualizing Trump's victory as a "working-class" victory would be an oversimplification that ignores a growing body of evidence which suggests that race and immigration are becoming increasingly salient predictors of White voters' economic evaluations. Seen in this way, it was Trump's ability to co-articulation of racist/xenophobic sentiment with a message of improving the material economic circumstances of White voters that contributed to his unlikely victory.

Chapter 4, the first principal findings chapter, set out to assess the empirical robustness of the "left behind thesis" by testing the validity of **H1** and **H2**. Chapter 4 assessed whether Trump's victory could be classified as a White working-class revolt by analysing non-college educated White voter turnout and vote switching between 2012 and 2016. Chapter 4 found that non-college educated White voter turnout was higher in 2016 than it was in 2012. Rather than being indicative of a mass mobilization of non-voters, however, non-college educated White turnout only increased by 3 points between 2012 and 2016 (IPUMS CPS 2020). Nonetheless, and despite these small increases in turnout, it is important to note that Trump improved on the 2012 performance of Mitt Romney among the socio-demographic group by converting 18 per cent of those who had voted for Obama in 2012.

Support for Trump was also heavily concentrated in the US "Rust Belt" – an area of the Upper Midwest/Great Lakes states that had experienced the effects of deindustrialization since the early Eighties (High 2003). The Rust Belt was an important region to analyse because of its large concentration of White voters without a college degree. The electoral behaviour of this socio-demographic group is also important to analyse given that they are Trump's most robust voter constituency (Pew Research Center 2018). Despite the importance of the Rust Belt to Trump's victory, however, the results of the regression models probing the

relationship between Rust Belt residency and support for Trump were somewhat mixed. On the one hand, results of the models using the ANES data in Chapter 4 indicated that working-class White voters' protectionist views were significant predictors of 2016 vote choice, and that these effects were intensified when we specified an interaction term with Rust Belt residency. Nonetheless, the spatial regression model indicated that declines in manufacturing employment share were largely unrelated to changes in the Republican vote share between 2012 and 2016 in the Rust Belt states. Overall, then, the doctoral thesis finds some evidence in support of **H1**. However, it is important to qualify that the evidence was not consistent across the individual-level and spatial level.

The mixed results for **H1** begin to answer the first research question posed in the introductory chapter; if Trump's victory cannot be conclusively characterised as a "revolt" on the part of White working-class, **H2** might be the more robust theoretical approximation of Trump victory when looking at it through a "left behind" lens. To assess whether the economic grievances of "left behind" Whites were associated with voters' cultural concerns, Chapter 4 also analysed the relationship between White racial attitudes/anti-immigrant sentiment on voters' negative national and personal economic assessments.

The results on the relationship between racial resentment and economic assessments provided particularly strong evidence in support of **H2**. Rational choice economic voting posits that economically aggrieved voters will usually punish the incumbent party if they preside over a poor economy (Lewis-Beck & Paldam 2000). Usually, such evaluations are unlikely to be moored to racial attitudes. In the Obama era, however, scholars have noted a "racial spillover" effect by which Whites' racial attitudes have begun to feed into multiple areas of US public opinion (Tesler 2012). Consistent with these developments, Chapter 4 found that voters' perceptions of the relative pace of the economic recovery from the Great Recession were closely tied to voters' negative assessments of President Obama. Moreover,

these negative evaluations were closely tied to voters' racial attitudes, with high levels of racial resentment being indicative of increasingly worse evaluations of Obama. Consequently, the results are consistent with the hypothesis (**H2**) that White voters' economic assessments are becoming increasingly correlated with their attitudes towards race.

Taken together, the results from Chapter 4 pointed to **H2** being the more robust hypothesis that contributes to our understanding of why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018). The notion of a working class "revolt" (**H1**) implies the mobilization of a large cohort of individuals. However, results of the validated voter data indicate that non-college educated White turnout increased only marginally in 2016 relative to 2012 (IPUMS CPS 2020). In addition, while the vote choice models from Chapter 4 indicate that negative economic assessments mattered in 2016, we find that effects were likely to be closely related to White racial attitudes. Consequently, the findings from Chapter 4 indicate that Trump's victory was not characteristic of a reaction against the political elites by a cohort of White voters that were solely motivated by "rational choice" economic voting (Lewis Beck and Paldam 2000). Rather, negative national and personal economic evaluations were shaped by racial animus, and especially towards the nation's first non-White President.

An Appeal to In-Group Members by Capitalising on Fear of the "Other"

In light of these findings concerning the "left behind" thesis, then, in what ways does the second significant explanatory context (cultural decline thesis) contribute to our understanding of Trump's victory in 2016? In order to test the empirical robustness of the cultural decline thesis as a frame for understanding why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016, the doctoral thesis posed the following research question:

2. Is Trump's victory explained by the activation of a number of forms of White in-group identity/psychological predispositions, as well as out-group prejudice, through the usage and deployment of radical right electoral cues?

Underpinning this second research question were an additional two hypotheses that account for the relative salience of White in-group favouritism and out-group prejudice as predictors of vote choice for Trump. Consistent with the emerging theoretical importance of in-group favouritism as a predictor of White Americans' political behaviour (Jardina 2019), **H3** proposed that Trump's victory may have been dependent on the "activation" of a number of salient in-group identities. Among these identities was White identity. While White identity has already been correlated with affect for Trump (Jardina 2019; Sides et al. 2019), it is important to note that these authors did not account for the effects of ethnocentrism (Kam and Kinder 2010) or American ethnic identity (Thompson 2020) in their models. I have argued that the omission of these forms of White in-group favouritism is problematic because we are subsequently unable to empirically assess which form of White in-group favouritism is the most potent in shaping White vote choice. In contrast to White in-group favouritism, the fourth hypothesis (**H4**) contends that out-group prejudice – and most especially anti-Black racism – was an especially salient predictor of vote choice in 2016 due to the continued White backlash against the nation's first Black President, as well as Trump's demonization of racial minorities throughout the 2016 campaign.

Chapter 5, the second principal findings chapter, set out to test the robustness of the cultural decline thesis by testing the empirical validity of **H3** and **H4**. To test **H3**, I unpacked each form of White in-group favouritism (White ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, White racial identity). This strategy involved outlining the ways in which radical right actors such as Trump mobilize dominant majority groups through the usage and deployment of

radical cues, as well as the extent to which Whites with robust ethnocentric, ethnic, and racial identity centralities had a high probability of voting for Trump as consequence of those identities themselves. Overall, I found that White ethnocentrism, American ethnic identity, and white racial identity were all salient forms of White in-group favouritism that were associated with the vote choice of Whites in 2016.

Despite these significant patterns of results, however, it is important to note that we find variations in the respective salience of these identities as predictors of White vote choice when additionally accounting for the effects of out-group prejudice in the vote choice models. For instance, the effects of both ethnocentrism and American ethnic identity disappear statistically when we control for the simultaneous effects of racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment on White vote choice. By contrast, the effects of Jardina's (2019) three-item White consciousness measure were robust to controlling for the effects of racial resentment and anti-immigrant sentiment. Consequently, forms of White in-group favouritism articulated along the lines of race appear to be more salient predictors of vote choice than Kam and Kinder's (2010) ethnocentrism measure or Thompson's (2020) measure of American ethnic identity when it comes to estimating vote choice for Trump.

Crucially, White in-group favouritism is only one side of a two-sided coin (Jardina 2019); the other side of which is out-group prejudice. This important theoretical distinction brings us to **H4**, which posited that White vote choice might also be explained by salient levels of resentment towards non-Whites. In my exploration of **H4**, I found that this resentment was not primed by Trump in 2016. Rather, it was the 8 years of the preceding Obama presidency that primed racial resentment, making the construct a salient predictor of White opposition to the Democratic Party in 2016. Consistent with developments in the White racial attitudes (Tesler 2015), I found that Whites' negative feelings towards Obama mediate the relationship between racial resentment and vote choice for Trump.

Overall, then, the significant results for both White racial identity/consciousness and racial resentment in the vote choice models indicate that both White in-group favouritism and out-group prejudice were salient predictors of vote choice in 2016. In light of the strong evidence in support of both **H3** and **H4**, these findings therefore point to the cultural decline thesis as being a robust explanatory context that functions as a frame for helping us better understand Trump's victory on the part of White Americans in 2016. Whereas Chapter 4 focussed on the relative importance of cultural factors as predictors of White support for Trump in 2016, scholars have also noted that White voters' socio-cultural concerns regarding the impact of demographic change on Whites' dominant majority status may have also shaped vote choice in 2016. Consequently, the next sub-section will discuss the results concerning the relationship between America's increasing diversity and White vote choice for Trump.

The Successful Mobilization of a Cohort of White Voters "Threatened" by Diversity

The third principal explanatory context was the changing America thesis. As noted in the previous section, the changing America thesis theorised that there may be a degree of association between America's increasing ethnic and racial diversity and White Americans' electoral behaviour in the 2016 election. In order to test the empirical robustness of the changing America thesis as a frame for understanding why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018), the doctoral thesis posed a third research question:

3. Is Trump's victory indicative of the successful electoral mobilization of a cohort of White voters who increasingly feel as though their dominant-majority status is coming under threat by America's changing demographics?

There were two competing hypotheses underpinning the "changing America" thesis. These were the "exit route" **(H5)** and the "voice route" **(H6)**. The "exit route" hypothesis posited that there is a link between increasing ethnic diversity and crumbling social capital in advanced Western democracies such as the US (Putnam 2007; Murray 2010; Abascal and Baldassarri 2015). **H5** theorized that diversity leads Whites to withdraw from aspects of public and civic life - including formal participation in politics such as voting in elections. By contrast, the "voice route" (**H6**) hypothesis contended that diversity might actually mobilize Whites to become politically engaged. The hypothesis being that White Americans perceive diversity as a threat to their dominant majority status (Major et al. 2018; Mutz 2018), and accordingly vote for radical right populist actors who promise to reduce immigration (Kaufmann and Goodwin 2018).

Chapter 6, the third principal findings chapter, set out to assess the empirical validity of **H5** and **H6**. Ever since the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, the US has changed from a nation that was 85 per cent non-Hispanic White to one in which the demographic group is projected to no longer constitute a majority of the US population by 2040. A significant consequence of this increasing diversity is that interactions with non-White individuals is becoming an increasingly significant factor in the lives of many White Americans. Chapter 6 explored the ways in which White Americans react to this increasing diversity. An exploration of the empirical validity of Putnam's (2007) "hunker down" thesis (H5) revealed that social capital is lower for Whites who tend to live in communities and areas of the US that are more ethnically heterogenous.

Nonetheless, an important limitation of Putnam's thesis as it might apply furthering our understanding of White Americans' political behaviour is that most Whites who voted for Trump tend to live in communities that exhibit higher rates of racial homogeneity (that is,

those at are Whiter). I have posited that this is an important observation, given that community homogeneity has crucial implications for levels of social capital (and, by extension, levels of political participation) within White communities. Indeed, the literature demonstrates that communities which have higher rates of racial homogeneity tend to exhibit better outcomes across a variety of social capital measures relative to those communities that are more heterogenous (Fieldhouse & Cutts 2010). Consistent with these observations in the academic literature, my analysis of the CPS data in Chapter 6 indicated that White individuals who live in communities that are less geographically proximate from metropolitan areas have higher rates of voter registration as well as higher levels of voter turnout in the 2016 election relative to Whites that live in metro or metro-proximate areas.[103]

My analysis of the data revealed an important limitation to **H5** when we seek to understand how White vote choice in 2016 was shaped by White Americans' relationship diversity. The main limitation with **H5** was that Whites with higher levels of political participation generally live in more homogenous communities, and consequently have less frequent contact with minorities than Whites who live in metro areas. There was also reason to suspect that it was Whites' perceptions of diversity that is driving public opinion towards demographic change as opposed to negative contact with non-Whites. One example of this is the historical phenomena of White flight. As noted in Chapter 6, White flight referred to the migration of Whites from urban centres of the Midwest and South to exurban and rural areas of the US (Kruse 2013). While there were many reasons for this White out-migration (Frey 1979), I found that a possible reason for moving was Whites' opposition to living in racially diverse neighbourhoods. Nonetheless, because the relationship between neighborhood

[103] Notwithstanding this interpretation, it is important to be aware of other reasons for why White turnout might be higher in rural areas. As aforenoted in Chapter 6, one alternative explanation is that, in racially heterogenous areas such as urban cores, Whites may feel that their vote counts less if they are Republicans.

heterogeneity and White geographic mobility differed for inter-city and inter-state migration, it is important to qualify that we cannot interpret the findings of the multinomial probit model as conclusive proof of this hypothesis.

To further assess whether diversity was as an important construct that shaped White Americans' electoral behaviour in 2016, therefore, I explored an additional hypothesis which posited that it might have more to do with how diversity is perceived by Whites as a threat to their majority status (**H6**) (Major et al. 2018; Mutz 2018). To understand how Whites perceptions of diversity (as opposed to their actual contact with diversity) might shape White political behaviour, it was useful to consider how perceptions of out-groups can be shaped by media consumption (Farris and Silber Mohammed 2018). I refer to the process in which Whites' views towards diversity are shaped by media consumption as the "radicalization" of Whites' perspectives. I hypothesized that this "radicalization" occurs when White individuals are exposed to information concerning the impact of demographic change from networks such as Fox. Consistent with my theoretical expectations, Chapter 6 found that Whites who selectively expose to Fox have higher levels of dominant majority demographic threat relative to Whites who get their news from other sources.[104] This finding was important because it explains why so many Whites perceive diversity as threatening despite the fact that they might live in overwhelmingly White neighbourhoods and have minimal day-to-day contact with ethnic minorities.

Critically, scholars have found that exposure to information concerning the impact of demographic change leads Whites to exhibit greater levels of political conservatism (Craig and Richeson, 2014). Consistent with the findings of Craig and Richeson (2014), I found that

[104] Nonetheless, it is important to be aware of possible reverse causality in the Fox News consumption → majority-minority threat relationship. For example, the perceptions of threat might also lead Whites to select into media outlets who cover demographic change in a manner that already conforms to their existing attitudes towards diversity.

dominant majority demographic threat was a strong and significant predictor of vote choice for Trump in 2016, with increasing levels of threat being associated with an increased probability of a White voter having cast their ballot for Trump in 2016. The results of the vote choice model are important because they are demonstrative of Trump's ability to mobilize White voters who felt as through their majority status was being eroded by America's increasing diversity. Overall, then, the results from Chapter 6 point to the "voice" root (Kaufman and Goodwin 2018) as being the more robust hypothesis underpinning the changing America thesis that helps us to better understand how Trump was able to mobilize so many White voters around in candidacy in the 2016 election.

Critical Evaluation of the Explanatory Accounts of Trump's Victory

The previous sub-section outlined my six main hypotheses which underpin the three significant explanatory contexts ("left behind" thesis, cultural decline thesis, changing America thesis) explored in the thesis. In this sub-section, I assess which of these three explanatory contexts provides the best frame for understand why 54 per cent of White voters cast their ballots for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018).

I first proceed to examine the robustness of the "left behind" thesis. Overall, the "left behind" thesis provides a comparatively weak explanation for Trump's victory. For example, my examination of the CPS voter turnout data indicated that White working-class turnout was up only marginally in 2016 relative to 2012 (IPUMS CPS 2020). Therefore, it cannot be said that Trump's victory was emblematic of a successful mobilisation of a large cohort of White working-class voters. Furthermore, we find relatively weak effects on vote choice through White voters' negative economic assessments across models. While the vote choice models in Chapters 4 and 7 indicated that negative national economic (or sociotropic) assessments mattered to some degree in 2016, it is important to qualify that these effects are largely

consistent with a large literature that speaks to the importance of "pocketbook" voting on vote choice. In this model, voters who perceived that the economy was worse in 2016 relative to 2012 elected Trump (a Republican) while punishing the incumbent party (i.e., the Democrats) for their perceived failure to improve the national economic outlook (MacKuen et al. 1992; Lewis-Beck 1985; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). Therefore, rather than economic assessments being uniquely important predictors of vote choice in 2016, it can be said that the significant effects on vote choice through White voters' negative national economic assessments are simply the continuation of a trend, whereby voters punish the incumbent party when they perceive that the state of nation's finances are not in a better place than they were relative to the previous election. Consequently, the left behind thesis does not provide a large amount of explanatory power when we attempt to understand why 54 percent of White voters cast their ballot for Trump in 2016 (Pew Research Center 2018).

Prima facie, the cultural decline thesis provides a strong explanation as to why so many Whites may have voted for Trump. Across models in Chapter 5, racial resentment is strongly predictive of vote choice for Trump. Indeed, the size of the probit coefficients often rival the effects of sociopolitical constructs such as partisanship and ideology. Similarly, in Chapter 7, the effects of racial resentment are robust to a number of additional controls, including authoritarian attitudes, and positive estimations of the Alt Right movement. Despite this consistent pattern of results for racial resentment, however, we must weight them against the results of **Table 7.3** in Chapter 7, which explored whether candidates other than Trump would have likewise been successful in mobilising Whites with salient levels of racial resentment. As indicated here, in the hypothetical matchups against Clinton-Rubio and Clinton-Cruz, racial resentment would still be a significant predictor of Republican vote choice even had Trump not been on the ballot (p <.001).

While it is important to note that the effects of racial resentment were stronger in the model of actual two-party vote choice in 2016 (Clinton-Trump), the significance of these results cannot be understated, because they provide a riposte to the argument that Trump was uniquely poised to activate racial resentment in 2016. That is, if the results concerning racial resentment are simply the continuation of a trend in ideological sorting, where the Republican Party has become a repository for politically-conservative voters with salient levels of racial animus over time (Druckman et al. 2013), then it cannot be said that racial animus uniquely predicted White vote choice in 2016. In light of these findings, it can be said that the cultural decline thesis provides a somewhat robust frame for understanding why racially aggrieved Whites might have voted for Trump. However, it is important to qualify that White racial attitudes were not uniquely important to the 2016 election, instead existing as the function of continuing trends in ideological sorting among politically-conservative Whites.

It is with these developments in mind that the conclusion chapter finally turns to consider the relative explanatory power of the "changing America" thesis. While an increasing number of voters feel as though mainstream politicians have not adequately addressed their economic plights (Judis 2016), also at the heart of this distance between White voters and elites is that many feel as though they are becoming a "minority" in their own country (Gest 2016), and accordingly vote for radical political actors who promise to halt America's increasing diversity. Large influxes of non-White immigrants after the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, and subsequent demographic change from higher non-White birth rates among these post-1965 immigrants, has engendered a fear of status loss in many Whites today. The prospect of losing majority status leads Whites to perceive outgroups including immigrants and Latinos in a negative light, leading them to feel "threatened" by America's increasing diversity (Major et al; Mutz 2018). As evidenced by

the strong set of results for majority-minority threat in Chapter 6, Trump was able to successfully capitalise on these feelings – for instance by championing policies that would restrict immigration. In doing so, he was able to mobilize Whites with salient levels of majority-minority threat around his candidacy.

The changing America thesis is an especially potent explanation for Trump's victory when we consider the results of the hypothetical matchup models from **Table 7.3** in Chapter 7. Here, I found that majority-minority threat would not have been a salient predictor of vote choice for the Republican candidate had Trump not been the nominee in 2016. Had the general election been a race between Clinton and Rubio, the effect majority-minority threat on vote choice for the Republican candidate would have been markedly weaker relative to its effect on the Trump vote (β = .821 versus β = 1.487), and would have only retained a p <.05 level of statistical significance. In a hypothetical race between Clinton and Cruz, the effect of majority-minority on vote choice for the Republican candidate would not have reached conventional levels of statistical significance.

These findings are particularly important because they suggest that Trump was able to activate feelings of threat among White voters in a way that other Republican candidates could not. These findings provide a clear point of comparison against those of racial resentment, where it was apparent that racial attitudes would have predicted vote choice for the Republican candidate *regardless* of who was the eventual nominee. Because Trump was uniquely able to activate feelings of threat, it can there be said that sociocultural explanations for Trump's victory – that is, those primarily grounded in Whites' fear of losing their majority status as a consequence of demographic change - are more salient than cultural explanations of Trump's victory. In this way, the changing America thesis has the largest amount of explanatory power when it comes to understanding Trump's victory in light of his strong performance among White voters in 2016.

Avenues for Future Research

While the doctoral thesis has analysed White voter behaviour in the 2016 election, it is useful to explore what the findings presented here might mean for the future study of White political behaviour. Future research should also continue to explore the effect of elite messaging on race and demographic change on the electoral mobilization of White voters. Political candidates are uniquely poised to mobilize voter sentiments through their messaging and rhetoric (Zaller 1992). While demonizing immigrants and minorities in an attempt to mobilize White voters will have raises number of troubling concerns for the future robustness of US intergroup relations and the continued marginalization of non-whites, Trump's successful mobilization of White voters along these lines in 2016 demonstrates that there is something of an untapped well for future candidates who might wish to appeal to White voters. It is also important to note that the usage and deployment of such elite cues not only have significant implications for White public opinion towards immigration and ethno-religious plurality. Since his victory in 2016, for instance, Trump has been largely successful in hijacking the national dialogue on immigration, framing the situation as the US-Mexico border as an "invasion" even as the number of undocumented immigrants in the US in the first year of his Presidency remained largely unchanged relative to 2007 (Pew Research Center 2020). Consequently, framing immigration as a "crisis" may continue to appeal to Whites threatened by demographic change as it did in 2016, even if such frames have not necessarily been reflective of the actual situation at the Southern border.

Contribution to Original Knowledge

Right-wing populist actors have enjoyed a tremendous amount of success across a host of advanced Western democracies in recent years (Eatwell and Goodwin 2018). The

increasing pattern across the West is that voters are turning away from mainstream politics to support parties and politicians of a more radical bent. Understanding the motivations that mobilise voters to cast their ballots for radical right populist parties and politicians is crucially important if we are to better understand whether these developments are indicative of a broader re-alignment of voters in advanced Western democracies.

Turning to examine how these trends have unfolded in the United States, this doctoral thesis has sought to understand which particular dimensions of White estrangement from mainstream politics Trump's unlikely victory in the 2016 Presidential election best represented. Economic anxiety (Morgan and Lee 2018), in-group favouritism (Jardina 2019), out-group prejudice (Schaffner et al. 2018), and dominant majority demographic threat (Major et al. 2018; Mutz 2018) have all been correlated with White vote choice Trump to varying degrees in the existing literature. Crucially, however, the essential contribution to knowledge to which this thesis lays claim is in its ability to better approximate which of these factors mattered the most in contributing to Trump's victory. In this respect, the doctoral thesis builds on the burgeoning literature on White political behaviour in the aftermath of the 2016 election by providing a robust framework that aims to fully account for the various economic, cultural, and socio-cultural dimensions of Trump's victory.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Levels of Majority-Minority Threat by Television Network

This appendix presents the results of a series two-way ANOVAs run on the same variables used in the multiple regression models presented in **Figure 6.7**. The purpose of this alternative model specification is to demonstrate additional robustness of my findings regarding the relationship between news consumption and majority minority threat. I specify a series of two-way ANOVAs by means of a univariate generalised linear modelling (GLM) procedure to account for two covariates (party ID and ideology). The results in **Tables A.1-A.4** paint a similar picture to those of **Figure 6.7**. We find higher levels of mean threat among Whites who exclusively watched news programs/talk shows on Fox as opposed to CNN across all four news formats. In contextualising these results it is also important to note that Whites who watch Fox have higher mean levels of majority-minority threat even after adjusting for the effects of Republican partisanship and conservative ideological self-placement on those scales.

Table A.1: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Morning Shows (Estimated Marginal Means)

Network				95% CI	
Fox	CNN	Mean	SE	Lower	Upper
No	No	.485	.003	.479	.492
	Yes	.448	.017	.415	.482
Yes	No	.528	.007	.514	.543
	Yes	.528	.023	.483	.574

Notes: All variables coded to range from 0 to 1. Dependent variable is threat of majority-minority demographic change. Party ID and ideology set to their mean values.

Table A.2: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Evening Shows (Estimated Marginal Means)

Network				95% CI	
Fox	CNN	Mean	SE	Lower	Upper
No	No	.491	.003	.484	.498
	Yes	.397	.016	.365	.429
Yes	No	.507	.007	.493	.521
	Yes	.551	.019	.514	.587

Notes: All variables coded to range from 0 to 1. Dependent variable is threat of majority-minority demographic change. Party ID and ideology set to their mean values.

Table A.3: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Sunday Talk Shows (Estimated Marginal Means)

Network				95% CI	
Fox	CNN	Mean	SE	Lower	Upper
No	No	.494	.003	.488	.501
	Yes	.424	.017	.392	.457
Yes	No	.497	.007	.482	.511
	Yes	.475	.024	.429	.521

Notes: All variables coded to range from 0 to 1. Dependent variable is threat of majority-minority demographic change. Party ID and ideology set to their mean values.

Table A.4: Two-Way ANOVA Results for Daily Talk Shows (Estimated Marginal Means)

Network				95% CI	
Fox	CNN	Mean	SE	Lower	Upper
No	No	.492	.004	.485	.499
	Yes	.429	.008	.433	.465
Yes	No	.524	.008	.508	.540
	Yes	.543	.018	.508	.577

Notes: All variables coded to range from 0 to 1. Dependent variable is threat of majority-minority demographic change. Party ID and ideology set to their mean values.

Appendix B: Additional Vote Choice Model for Effect of Majority-Minority Threat on Vote Choice (One Item Measure)

Table B.1: Probit Model Showing Effect of Majority-Minority Threat on White Vote Choice in 2016

	2016
Majority-Minority Threat (1 item cultural measure)	.441*** (.062)
Party ID	1.225*** (.069)
Ideology	.800*** (.107)
Female	-.102* (.051)
Age	.224*** (.057)
Married	.001 (.057)
Education	-.139* (.057)
Income	.015 (.063)
Union	.017 (.068)
Born again	.021 (.055)
South	.123* (.047)
Constant	.336*** (.040)
Pseudo R^2	.708
N	4,681

Notes: Table entries are beta coefficients. Standard errors given in parenthesis. Dependent variable vote choice for Clinton or Trump; 0 = "Clinton"; 1 = "Trump". Sample limited to non-Hispanic Whites. *p <.05 **p <.01***p <.001.

Source: 2016 Voter Survey